"Dawn Over Samarkand" MOISSAYE J. OLGIN

new Masses JUNE 4, 1935 10c

Granville Hicks Fired

First Major Victim of Big Business's Campaign to Gag the Colleges—Rensselaer Institute "Retrenches" by Discharging Its Most Distinguished Professor—*Page 9*

What Will the Middle Class Gain From the Revolution?

By EARL BROWDER

Margaret Wright Mather Reviews the Press

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FRIDAY—MAY 31

Benefit

NEW MASSES

THEATRE OF ACTION *Presents*

THE YOUNG GO FIRST

By Peter Martin, George Scudder and Charles Friedman

A DRAMA OF THE CCC CAMPS

•

PARK THEATRE

(ON COLUMBUS CIRCLE)

Friday Evening

MAY 31 — 8:45 P. M.

Tickets: $1.10, 83c, 68c, 50c, 25c

ON SALE AT

PARK THEATRE BOX OFFICE

Workers Bookshop, 50 East 13th Street.
New Masses, 31 East 27th Street, N. Y.

Order tickets by mail or phone—CAledonia 5-3076

Brooks Atkinson *says*

IN JUNE ISSUE—JUST OUT!

- SKETCHES from "PARADE" —*by Paul Peters and Geo. Sklar*
- PHOTOS from "PESCADOS" —*a film by Paul Strand*
- COLOR IN THE FILMS —*Robert Edmond Jones*
- THE THIRD STAGE —*Paul Love*
- THE LAW OF CONFLICT —*John Howard Lawson*
- A $200 PRIZE PLAY CONTEST

IN JULY—Paul Robeson, Langston Hughes, Eugene Gordon, and others contribute to a special 48-page number on the Negro in the Theatre Arts.

"The Broadway theatre has no program and no convictions; and in the midst of a vast social upheaval it has no comment to make . . . the theatre of the Left is becoming increasingly dynamic and is no longer a skirmish on the fringe of the theatre . . . it knows where it intends to go and it does not doubt its ability to get there . . . it is ably served by New Theatre magazine which is edited with professional skill and publishes excellent dramatic material."—*New York Times*

Subscribe Now—$1.50 a Year, or

Mail 15c for a Sample Copy to

NEW THEATRE

c/o P. O. BOX 67 STATION O, N. Y. C.

Telephone: WAtkins 9-5473

NEW DANCE LEAGUE

ALL DAY DANCE FESTIVAL

NEW DANCES

NON-PROFESSIONAL

MATINEE

Bill Matons Experimental Group

Blanche Evan and Group
Nature Friends Dance Group

Rekud Ami (Jewish Folk Dance Group)

Junior Red Dancers

New Dance Group (Second Troupe)

Tickets: 35c, 55c, 75c

PROFESSIONAL GROUPS

EVENING

Tamiris and Group

Charles Weidman, Jose Limon and Group

Ruth Allerhand Group

New Dance Group (Jane Dudley, Miriam Blecher)

The Dance Unit (dir. Anna Sokolow)

Nadia Chilkovsky and the Dance Studio

Winner of Afternoon Competition

Tickets: 35c, 55c, 83c, $1.10

SUNDAY
JUNE 9th
PARK THEATRE
Columbus Circle

ON SALE AT: NEW DANCE LEAGUE, 114 W. 14th St.; AMERICAN LEAGUE AGAINST WAR AND FASCISM, 213 Fourth Ave.; BOOK SHOP, 50 E. 13th St.; BOX OFFICE, CIrcle 7-4848

Benefit American League Against War and Fascism

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

New Masses

JUNE 4, 1935

The Dismissal of Hicks

GRANVILLE HICKS, an editor of THE NEW MASSES, is the first well-known professor to be expelled from a college during the present anti-Red campaign. Hicks has never concealed his support of the Communist Party. His dismissal from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute is an indication of what will occur throughout the U.S., not only to Communist but also to liberal and pacifist professors, unless mass pressure is brought on educational institutions to resist the jingo drive for the suppression of free speech and freedom of political belief. The American Civil Liberties Union has announced that a delegation headed by Harry Elmer Barnes will call upon Edwin Jarrett, acting president of Rensselaer, and will insist that some explanation be given for the Institute's summary action. The American Association of University Professors has promised a private investigation; the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners plans to rally fifty nationally-known educators to protest Hicks' dismissal. In this issue of THE NEW MASSES, appears an article by Hicks stating the case in full, and also interviews with the acting president, acting director and several professors at the Institute. Hicks did his work at Rensselaer thoroughly, his efficiency was above criticism. But he was a Communist, and so he must go—unless the united action of those interested in preserving academic freedom forces the Institute's authorities to retreat from their reactionary position.

WHAT THE DECISION MEANS — *Limbach*

Coughlin's "Democracy"

"I AM the National Union for Social Justice," Father Coughlin told reporters the day before his mass meeting at Madison Square Garden. He proceeded to prove it the next night in a style that left no doubt as to his qualifications for the job of *Der Fuehrer*. Father Coughlin's meetings (the one in New York was the third) are of the kind that the United States has never known—but Germany has. Supposedly "membership meetings" of the National Union for Social Justice, they are actually political rallies designed to consolidate a mass movement whose character grows more ominously fascist each day. The New York audience was composed largely of middle-class and white-collar people. The overwhelming majority undoubtedly voted for Roosevelt and believed in him two years ago. But at Coughlin's meeting they booed Roosevelt, as well as "labor's friend," Senator Wagner. And significant of their deepseated, if confused, dissatisfaction with the status quo is the fact that they gave their greatest applause to the radio priest's demagogic statement that the capitalist system must be "constitutionally voted out of existence." In contrast, his appeals that they organize within the Republican and Democratic Parties were greeted with silence.

SIGNIFICANT, too, were Coughlin's repeated assurances that he believed in democracy and wanted to establish "real democracy" in this country. Coughlin was here not only replying to the criticisms of the undemocratic structure of the National Union, but using a catchword that has deep historical roots in this country. Just as Hitler found it necessary to use the slogan of "National Socialism" because of the existence of a powerful labor movement and old Marxist traditions in Germany, so Coughlin may be expected to exploit the democratic traditions of the American people in order to fur-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ther a movement that would destroy all democratic rights and to establish the open terrorist dictatorship of big capital. Hence, it would be a fatal mistake to do what a number of liberals and Socialists seem inclined to do: to hear in Father Coughlin only an echo of the liberal vaporings of the past. Coughlin is neither a Bryan nor an elder LaFollette. Though his radical bombast is not yet the equal of Hitler's, its tendency and the tendency of all his activities are unmistakable. Add to this the fact that he is undoubtedly being directed and financed by Wall Street's Committee for the Nation, that he has strong ties with such fascists as Hearst and Huey Long and the sinister character of his movement becomes clear.

The Dunckel Bill

MICHIGAN'S Dunckel Bill has been passed by both houses—but not in its original form. The text we printed two weeks ago, revealing this measure as the most complete of all the gag laws proposed against labor, has been considerably amended. Vicious enough in its intent still, the Dunckel Bill as passed formally repeats the provisions of the Michigan Criminal Syndicalism law of 1919, but does not include penalties for reading a newspaper or magazine, attending a labor meeting, possessing a leaflet and such other mediaeval provisions. "I seriously doubt if the Dunckel-Baldwin Bill will become law. Your points are well taken in the matter," wrote Speaker Schroeder of the Michigan House of Representatives to a reader of THE NEW MASSES who sent him a protest. Four hundred delegates of the Conference for Protection of Civil Rights, representing 450,000 workers, massed in the House and demanded that the bill be killed. Adding their force to that of the protests by mail and wire, they compelled the emasculation of the bill. As George Morris writes in The Daily Worker of the bill as finally passed: "It was a face-saving proposal designed to enable the reactionary fascist forces to say that something was passed." The fight in Michigan goes on, now centering on Governor Fitzgerald to force him to veto the bill, and if he signs it, to force a referendum for its repeal.

A Strike Against Profiteers

THE Roosevelt government has openly endorsed starvation. But workers refuse to accept it "philosophically." A few months ago, a one-day

Rico

buying strike in Los Angeles reduced the price of meat five cents a pound. With this precedent, New York consumers and independent butchers have been refusing to buy meat until the wholesalers—Swift and Co., the United Dressed Beef Co., Wilson and Co. and others—reduce retail prices by 10 percent. Led by the City Action Committee against the High Cost of Living and supported by such organizations as the United Council of Working Class Women, over 500 butchers in the suburbs of Brownsville and Brighton, Coney Island and the Bronx, have closed their shops and joined picket lines before the wholesale distributing points. Meat consumption has dropped so precipitously that the Chicago packers have sent representatives to "investigate"; chain stores, which sell meat in defiance of the strike, report a decided slump in sales.

WORKING-CLASS housewives adopt the same methods that their husbands and sons use in industrial struggles—demonstrations, street meetings, parades, picketing. The press has attempted to distort their aims, has consistently tried to give the impression that the strike is directed against small Jewish butchers. But the independent butchers have been approached so successfully that they have reacted in the same way as the independent grocer reacted to the National Biscuit Company strike and the independent druggist to the struggle between clerks and wholesale drug dealers. In both cases, the neighborhood store owner realized that his economic interests were identical with those of the strikers. Now the corner butcher understands that he can only remain in business if the price of meat is such that his working-class customers can afford to buy. Success in the local meat strike is a step toward spreading the fight nationally—not only against wholesale butchers but against all wholesalers who profit by boosting the prices of consumer goods.

It's Crazy to Be Poor

WITH 20,000 men on strike in lumber camps and mills, and a general marine strike in the offing, jittery West Coast employers are trying out a new weapon against workers—the charge of insanity. The Portland, Ore., authorities are committing unemployed leaders to the asylum. Mrs. Minnie Shank, mother of three children, was forced to remain five weeks among mental defectives, and dared not complain for fear her protests would be diagnosed as "persecution complex." The physician who committed her declared afterward she was perfectly sane but he had sent her to the institution because she needed rest and regular food! Freed by the International Labor Defense after a hard fight, Mrs. Shanks is leading the struggles in her neighborhood for relief and acting as attorney for herself and twelve other workers who were arrested at the relief bureau. But this new form of persecution will be widely used. The Hearst newspapers on the coast are leading in a frenzied campaign to make all militant workers liable to commitment for "paranoia."

A National Negro Conference

THE National Conference on "The Position of the Negro in our National Economic Crisis," held in Washington on May 18-20 (reported by our correspondent in this issue), was a sensitive political barometer of practically all strata of the Negro people. Organized by the Joint Committee on National Recovery, composed of representatives of Negro reformist organizations and church groups, and under the auspices, as well, of the Social Science Division of Howard University, the Conference was attended by outstanding proponents of all political viewpoints. One newspaper referred to it as the most brilliant in Negro personnel of all recent conferences. The participation of some thirty Negro and white workers and sharecroppers, who brought their problems most intimately and directly to the Conference, undoubtedly played the chief role in bridging the traditional aloofness peculiar to intellectuals and in saving the Conference from mere abstract theorizing. The strong Left sentiment is all the more significant because of the fact that Government spokesmen and people of the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

extreme Right and Center had ample opportunity to present their positions. This leftward trend crystallized in the proposal for calling a broad National Negro Congress.

THE Government representatives were from the start apologetically, even helplessly, on the defensive. There was nothing they could answer to the numerous pointed questions and reminders concerning the Roosevelt Administration's policy with regard to the Negro. Speakers for the sub-departments of the A.A.A. and the N.R.A. themselves neatly exposed the function of their Negro employes by attempting to "pass the buck" to them when faced with a poser. The whole farce was reminiscent of Lieutenant Battle's role in the Harlem inquiry. Facts themselves, their able presentation by a number of speakers, propelled the Conference toward the most outspoken denunciation of the New Deal yet coming from a broadly representative gathering of Negroes. As James W. Ford pointed out in his address, the Conference can serve as an initial step in uniting Negro organizations and those engaged in a struggle for Negro rights around a common program. Although the delegates were representative of varied tendencies and currents, it nevertheless showed the possibility for initiating a people's movement for Negro rights at once. The proposed National Negro Congress can play a role even greater.

Terror in Alabama

WHEN the Alabama rulers were presented with the Supreme Court decision demanding that Negroes should be placed on jury rolls, their only means of striking back was renewed terror. There have been six beatings and kidnapings since May 1 in and around Birmingham. Kidnapings frequently follow immediately on release from arrest on some trumped-up charge. May 19, Robert Washington, Negro leader, was driven out of Selma jail at the point of a gun after being held for four days for "aggravated vagrancy." On the steps he was seized by eight kidnapers in two cars. The kidnapers drove fifteen miles from the city, stripped him and lashed him into unconsciousness. John Foster, I.L.D. representative who had gone to Selma in defense of Washington, was also seized and has disappeared. The preceding week, Blaine Owen and Henry Johnson, two white workers had been arrested by sheriff's deputies for attending a meeting. They were turned over to landlord nightriders, taken for a ride and beaten. On May 23, another gang of "well-dressed citizens" entered a private house, broke up a meeting and drove off with five men, warning them to "leave that business alone." The wave of terror began on May Day with the kidnaping of Robert Wood, district secretary of the I.L.D., after a series of flying meetings and demonstrations. The kidnapers tried to force information about the Scottsboro case out of Wood. When he refused to answer they shouted "nigger-lover," and beat him with fists, feet, belt buckles and anything else that was handy.

Labor Fights Back

THE intensification of extra-legal activities in Alabama is ascribed primarily to the exasperation of reactionary employers over the unfavorable Scottsboro decision, but also to the seething rebellion of local miners against the wage differential and the sell-out agreement which has been extended to June 16, and to widespread discontent among sharecroppers. The Red scare has failed to intimidate or break up the solidarity of workers, and legal measures such as the Downs literature ordinance which provides a six-month jail term and a fine of $100 for the possession of political pamphlets, newspapers or magazines, have been insufficient. Governor Bibb Graves, formerly active in the Ku Klux Klan in the days when it was a "legal" organization is privately in sympathy with the fascist gangs. In addition to the lawless "Red Squad," the country is at the mercy of such gangsters as Milt McDuff and Fred McDuff of the McDuff National Detective Agency. The McDuffs are hired by the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company and possess practically full police powers, raiding homes and making arrests without warrants. Throughout the South, cotton chopping season is approaching. While the local authorities and the government refuse relief, cotton planters are attempting to obtain labor of pickers and choppers at forty or fifty cents a day. The union demands $1.25 for an eight hour day for Negroes and whites alike. A leaflet issued recently by the Share Croppers' Union of Alabama states, "The few of us who made a little cotton and corn had to give it to the landlords for debts which we did not owe. They have even sent sheriffs to our corn cribs who would stand by with their guns ready to kill if we tried to prevent them from taking our daily bread before our eyes."

New Masses

VOL. XV, No. 10 CONTENTS JUNE 4, 1935

Editorial Comment..... 3
The Guild Convention..... 6
Racketeering in Hospitals..... 6
The Forced Work Program..... 7
Fired for Being a Communist
Granville Hicks 9
Hicks—The Man They "Could Spare"
Bruce Minton 10
Heil, Blue and Gold.....Vera Cox 13
Toward a National Negro Congress
Eleanor Ryan 14
Now We'll Tell You Something
William Gropper 16
What Is Cummunism?
What the Middle Class Can Gain from the Revolution.....Earl Browder 18
Correspondence 21
Review and Comment
A Study in National Liberation
Moissaye J. Olgin 22
Marianne Moore and Eliot..Orrick Johns 24
Nazi Work of Art.....Bernard Smith 25
The Theatre:
"The Young Go First"
Michael Blankfort 27
Sklar's and Peters' "Parade"
Stanley Burnshaw 28
The National Negro Theatre..... 28
Reviewing the Press
Margaret Wright Mather 29
Between Ourselves 30
Drawings by
Russell T. Limbach, Jacob Burck, Crockett Johnson.

EDITORS:

MICHAEL GOLD, EUGENE GORDON, GRANVILLE HICKS, ORRICK JOHNS, JOSHUA KUNITZ, RUSSELL T. LIMBACH, HERMAN MICHELSON, JOSEPH NORTH, ASHLEY PETTIS, WILLIAM RANDORF.

WILLIAM BROWDER, *Business Manager*

Published weekly by the NEW MASSES, INC., at 31 East 27th Street, New York City. Mid West Bureau, 184 West Washington Street, Room 703, Chicago.

Copyright, 1935, NEW MASSES, INC., Reg. U. S. Patent Office. Drawings and text may not be reprinted without permission.

Entered as second-class matter, June 24, 1926, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Single copies, 10 cents. Subscriptions, $3.50 a year in U. S. and Colonies and Mexico. Six months $2; three months $1; Foreign $4.50 a year; six months $2.50; three months $1.25. Subscribers are notified that no change in address can be effected in less than two weeks. THE NEW MASSES welcomes the work of new writers, in prose and verse, and of artists. Manuscripts and drawings must be accompanied by return postage. THE NEW MASSES pays for contributions.

178

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Guild Convention

FOR the first time in the history of American journalism the newspaper proprietor is worrying about the reporter's soul. The lowly leg-man and his modest confrere, the re-write man, have become the objects of a sudden philanthropic passion on the part of their common benefactor, the publisher. That doesn't mean, of course, that salaries will be raised or that hours will be cut or that security of employment will be guaranteed.

No. The proprietor is hoping to save the reporter's soul by saving him from the pitfalls of collective bargaining. He is hoping to preserve the leg-man's reportorial integrity by maintaining the right to hire and fire him at a moment's notice. He is willing to safeguard the writer's editorial honesty by maintaining for him the privilege of saying exactly what his employer thinks. The intellectual dignity required to spy on divorcees and to edit the high-sounding banalities of unscrupulous vote-seekers can only be preserved through individual contract.

It is, perhaps, difficult to sympathize whole-heartedly with the publisher's predicament until one realizes that his fundamental American "rights" have recently been threatened right and left. There was, for instance, that $12.50 minimum wage that slipped into the newspaper code. Then there was the Child Labor Amendment that would hamper the publisher in one of his pet philanthropies —that of rescuing thoughtless children from the demoralizing influences of the playground by sending them forth to peddle his papers. And now the reporters and re-write men are planning, through the Newspaper Guild, to affiliate with the American Federation of Labor.

Affiliation with the A.F. of L. will undoubtedly be one of the foremost considerations before the Guild at its coming national convention in Cleveland, June 3, 4 and 5. A move to affiliate was tabled at the St. Paul convention, one year ago, in the face of more pressing, immediate problems. Since then the sentiment for affiliation has grown steadily—most local guilds are already on record as favoring it. A poll of the New York Guild, just finished, showed the members overwhelmingly for the move.

It will be a significant step for newspaper men. Recently white-collar workers have showed real signs of joining the ranks of militant organized labor. The open hostility of employers to granting them even the most fundamental economic rights, the complete exposure of the N.R.A.'s "guarantee" of those rights and the demonstrated effectiveness of labor's only real weapon, the strike, have been eye-openers for clerks, office workers, and professionals, including reporters. Their respect for the organized printer, plumber, bricklayer and actor has increased with every economic struggle. They are beginning to see but one solution to their problems—organization, firmly controlled by the rank and file.

The Guild has gone a long way in the year and a half of its existence. From a timorous, semi-professional organization, with vague aims, it has become an aggressive trade union, with definite, concrete objectives. Its original constitution bespoke a desire for higher standards of journalism. The present constitution calls for collective action in the struggle for economic betterment. At its last convention, the Guild endorsed the Lundeen Unemployment Insurance Bill (HR 2827) and passed a resolution calling for the release of Tom Mooney. It declared publicly that:

> Reporting is a high calling that has fallen into disrepute because newswriters have been so often degraded as hirelings compelled by their employers to serve the purposes of politicians, monopolies, speculators in the necessaries of life, exploiters of labor, and fomenters of war.

This militant resistance is the keynote today of American Newspaper Guild activities. That it will continue is evident. If the temper of the locals is accurately reflected in the decisions of the coming convention, the Guild will undoubtedly throw its full weight into the growing rank and file labor movement; and if it does, its presence will be felt throughout the entire country. Its voice will be heard not only in the local trades and labor councils, but in the upper stratum of the bureaucratic A.F. of L. hierarchy. The Guild has developed a philosophy and a perspective that is almost wholly absent in the reactionary labor leader's consciousness—a philosophy and a perspective that will be effective aids in the great impending social and economic conflicts.

Racketeering In Hospitals

AT Lebanon Hospital in the Bronx, after a two-hour strike May 14, twenty-nine employes were locked out and at Beth Israel in Brooklyn eight were fired. When other Beth Israel employes protested the discharge of the eight, the hospital officials promptly fired ninety more. The specific reason given was "efforts to organize."

The strike notice, issued by the Association of Federation Employes, had stated that "through skeleton staffs no client or patient will suffer," but officials raised the cry that "cruel and callous workers were endangering the lives of patients."

The wave of strikes involving porters, orderlies, dietician helpers, technicians and social workers in ninety-one institutions aided by the Federation of Jewish Charities has shown who are the "callous" in this instance. The case of one hospital, Lebanon, is an example of the exploitation, wage-slashing and racketeering that now prevails in so many of the various Federation charities.

The late Jonas Weil left $5,000 to the hospital. On the strength of this meagre provision, two sons, L. Victor Weil and B. J. Weil, secured full control, and elected their own directors. One of the directors, Sidney Schwab, a brother of Mrs. Victor Weil, bequeathed a quarter of a million dollars to be distributed in charities at the Weils' discretion. The building which houses Lebanon is one of the oldest in the Bronx, formerly an Ursuline convent, and this typical firetrap had remained in practically its original state. The natural expectation was that Mr. Schwab's money would be used to put up a new building. Nothing of the kind happened. The fire department ordered twenty-four private beds removed to reduce the danger; it ordered sprinkler systems put in; the ex-convent was rewired at a cost of $4,000. Inspectors demanded removal of all inflammable material from the main structure and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

these supplies were stored in a metal building outside. Extra inspections must be made at frequent intervals, but essentially the hospital remains a firetrap with wooden floors and rickety wooden staircases. Members of the personnel state that if a blaze started it would be impossible for anyone to escape.

Superintendent George E. Halpern of Lebanon receives $8,100 a year in regular salary. It was formerly $10,000 but, like all other pay of employes, has been subjected to three cuts. In addition to this, however, Mr. Halpern is given his private residence and food maintenance free, the help of two servants, a Cadillac, free gas and even the daily newspapers. The total compensation is not far from double the salary.

Halpern's job is to run the hospital without a deficit; that is, without drawing on the directors and the Schwab legacy. He does it.

Porters make $35 a month for seven days' work a week and twelve hours a day. They sleep sixteen in a room that has one toilet and two wash bowls. When it rains the roof over their beds leaks. Student nurses are paid $25 a month. They also work twelve hours a day, under the impression that they are going to school, but spend a minimum of their time in the class room and most of it at work usually done by porters.

Trained technicians are little better paid. The technician in charge of chemistry, for example, gets $61 a month. All doctors—hospital staff, dispensary staff and internes—work for nothing. Although the Federation of Jewish Charities appropriated a special sum to rescind a pay-cut, this was not passed on to employes at Lebanon until the union threatened to strike, when it was quietly put into the pay envelopes without comment.

In spite of years of free professional service given by staff members, they are discriminated against by the director-autocrats. Recently a doctor who had worked for twenty years in the hospital was superseded in a high staff position by a friend of the directors who had never before been inside of Lebanon.

To add the final pinch to this record of Pecksniffian "economy," directors and officials use the hospital to obtain commodities at wholesale prices. While families are being evicted from Mr. Weil's block of railroad flats across the street, a Rolls Royce drives up to the main entrance of the hospital and a servant descends to buy a cake of soap at a discount!

The Forced Work Program

THE shock that ran through the country at Roosevelt's cold-blooded announcement of $19 to $94 a month wages under the "new" work program has been followed by a great wave of anger. Demand for militant action by labor throughout the country to defeat the coolie pay rates arose immediately and is still growing. Millions of workers find that the set wages in many sections are lower even than the scanty relief, "made work" or existing prevailing wages. But this was one of the primary purposes behind the announced schedule. It was done at the orders of a handful of industrial barons in a smashing offensive to beat down to a minimum whatever remains of the "American standard of living."

That Roosevelt acted only as a puppet for them is clear, if one remembers three recent events. Last December, the Joint Business Conference for Economic Recovery meeting at White Sulphur Springs announced: "Relief is not properly a function of the Federal Government, but is primarily the obligation of the family, or private charity, of the municipality and State." The following month Roosevelt in his statement to Congress said: "The Federal Government must and shall quit this business of relief." And during the same month the White House announced that the Business Planning and Advisory Council, composed of 52 of the largest American business executives, would have representatives actually sitting in whenever a bill affecting business was being drafted by the administration.

The law allows Roosevelt until June 30, 1937, to spend $4,800,000,000. A year from now the Democratic and Republican national conventions meet. Though it is unlikely that Roosevelt can spend all the funds by then, he undoubtedly will disburse ostentatiously as much as is necessary to buy his renomination and re-election at the expense of the mass misery of the people.

What else is involved in the Works Relief Program? Of the more than five million families (comprising more than 20,000,000 persons) on relief, the Administration says it will put 3,500,000 persons to work. Only one member of a family may be put to work under Roosevelt's proposed program. In February, 1935, there were 3,106,000 persons on the P.W.A., C.C.C. and Federal work relief projects, all of which are to be absorbed by the New Work Program. The C.C.C. is to be increased to about double its present enrollment or 600,000. In the meantime, since no one not on relief is eligible, relief rolls will naturally be swelled from the ranks of the 17,000,000 unemployed, many of whom are still on their own, but with dwindling resources. Thus the net effect on employment will have been to put just 300,000 men to "work"—in the semi-military C.C.C.!

Even were Roosevelt to spend the entire amount—the P.W.A. has still one and a half billion dollars of old funds unexpended—who would benefit? Nearly 50 percent would go for materials, to increase profits of private employers; if the rural electrification scheme is carried through, it would be virtually a subsidy to private capital to sell electric current and equipment, and only a small amount would go to labor as wages, and that on a starvation scale.

It is evident this new scheme will not produce different results in respect to housing, conservation of resources, or relief of unemployment or mass misery than its predecessors, the P.W.A., F.E.R.A. and, notably, the quick-spending program of the C.W.A., under which the "pump of business" was to be "primed" but which brought no real improvement to workers. The present program is, at least unofficially, no longer considered a "priming" one, especially since the next two months are expected to bring a new low for the current industrial down-trend.

Roosevelt's objectives, beyond his primary one of getting re-elected, include these: To save the Federal government from spending money for relief by putting a greater burden on localities; to afford tax relief to the rich by fostering the idea of sales taxes, already in force in some twenty states, to pay for all relief; to assure private business of a supply of cheap labor; to improve the machinery and expand the semi-trained manpower available for war preparations, by means of direct army and navy appropriations and by increasing the C.C.C. camps. The grand basis on which all these objectives will be obtained is a system of forced labor, riveted on the country by Roosevelt as the agent of big business.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE BOWL OF RICE

Jacob Burck

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Fired for Being a Communist

GRANVILLE HICKS

TROY, N. Y.

ON May 13, 1935, I received notice that Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute did not desire my services for next year. "Facing the necessity for immediate retrenchment in the expenditures of the Institute," the Prudential Committee had decided not to renew my contract. In view of the short notice, I was told, I would receive one-half year's salary.

The reasons for my "release," as the administration prefers to call it, are in a sense unknown, since the Institute has refused to make any further explanation. The manner of my release, however, is already on the records. I admit that the administration might have waited until next fall to notify me and it might not have voted me the half year's salary. If it had done so, I very possibly would have had no legal redress, since the status of teachers is only slightly more secure than that of bricklayers. Therefore, I have some reason to be grateful.

But it is perfectly clear that the manner of my release does not conform to the practice of reputable educational institutions. Teaching positions are filled in the early spring. Therefore, the American Association of University Professors advises that teachers should be informed of proposed changes by February at the latest. The stated policy of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, moreover, provides that assistant professors who have served for three years or more shall be given a full year's notice if their contracts are not to be renewed.

Few readers of THE NEW MASSES will have to wait for an official statement from the Institute in order to understand why R.P.I. wants to get rid of me. The talk about retrenchment will deceive no one who can add. An instructor has been appointed to take my place; his salary plus the half year's salary to be paid me equals $500 more than my salary. The Institute could have given me the full year's notice that their stated policy calls for and still have saved $500. The administration might at least have discussed with me a reduction in salary of $250 a year, which would have saved in two years just as much as my release will save. A salary cut of $41.67 a year, applied to each of the six members of the department, would also have brought about the desired result. Ingenious persons can evolve a variety of other schemes—none of which the administration cared to consider.

Retrenchment is supposed to be in full swing throughout the Institute, but I have heard of no other assistant professor who is leaving. Why retrenchment in my own department should begin with me is far from clear—if, that is, one accepts the official theory. I have had ten years of teaching experience, six of them at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. No one has ever expressed to me a criticism of my work in the classroom. I doubt if it could be shown that my teaching has been less competent or less conscientious than that of any one of my colleagues. So far as publication is concerned—and Rensselaer, like any other college, lays considerable emphasis on the "productivity" of its faculty—my record, either in the scholarly journals or the more popular periodicals, equals, I suspect, that of any associates.

THE administration knows, the readers of THE NEW MASSES know and I know why retrenchment began with me. I came to R.P.I. in 1929, after three years of teaching at Smith College and a year of graduate work and teaching at Harvard. I was given a position for one year as assistant professor. At the end of that year I was urged to remain and my salary was raised. A year or two later I was encouraged to refuse an offer from another college.

In the autumn of 1932 I signed the statement of the League of Professional Groups for Foster and Ford. My interest in Communism had begun some two years earlier, but that was the first public avowal of my position. Since that time I have supported the Communist Party always and openly.

In the classroom I have never propagandized for Communism. I have followed a policy that may or may not have been correct, but at least was practical. Naturally I have taught literature courses from a Marxist point of view; I could not teach them from any other; but I have avoided so far as possible the Marxist terminology. I have never raised political issues, and if they have been raised by the students, I have dealt with them as objectively as I could. Very possibly I have had some influence that might in the long run inoculate students against capitalist dogmas; I hope that is true. But if it is true, it is because, as Emerson says, what we are speaks louder than what we say. In some ways, I am ashamed to confess it, but I know that 99 percent of my students have been unaware that I was a Communist and that the one percent learned it from outside sources. I cannot take the time to justify this policy to readers of THE NEW MASSES; there ought to be no necessity of justifying it to the administration of R.P.I.

The administration has never been unaware of my political views, but it has discussed them with me on only two occasions. A year ago the principal of a high school in a nearby city challenged the members of an anti-war committee in his school—a committee with which I had had absolutely no connection—to produce a speaker to present their views. They asked me to speak, and I agreed to do so. The principal thereupon wrote to the Board of Trustees, stating that I had tried to organize a Communist society in his school and that I ought to be fired. When I explained precisely what had happened, I was told that I was well within my rights, and the matter, so far as I know, was dropped.

The second incident occurred last fall. I was called to the office by Dr. Ray Palmer Baker, at the time assistant director of the Institute. Dr. Baker told me that an influential alumnus had written him, protesting against my article in THE NEW MASSES on Section 5 of The New York Times. He assured me that he had no desire to limit in any way my freedom of utterance; he merely wanted me to realize what the effects of some of my activities were. I pointed out that a liberal position such as he had adopted was bound to provoke some criticism, and we agreed that such persons as the (to me) anonymous alumnus were very narrow minded.

That same day I was again called to the office, and this time conferred with both Dr. Baker and the late Palmer C. Ricketts, then Director and President of the Institute. Director Ricketts did not allude to the influential alumnus. He merely said that he had read in the college paper an account of my NEW MASSES article and he feared that such an article would antagonize The Times against the Institute, which needed the publicity The Times could give it. He asked me if I did not think I had any responsibility to the Institute. When I said that of course I had responsibilities to the college, but that in my opinion they ended when I left the campus, he began to remonstrate. "If you were working for the General Electric," he began, but broke off with, "That's different, of course." Thereafter he merely asked me to take into consideration the possible effect of my writings on the Institute. This, I said, I had always done, though, I pointed out, there were other interests that I also had to consider and that might be more important than the Institute's. I had, I said, responsibilities as a critic, for example, that came before my concern for the success of the Institute's publicity campaigns.

The interview ended amiably, even humorously. Director Ricketts asked me what I was, and I said, "A Communist." "What is a Communist?" he asked. I tried to tell him. "You used to be a Socialist," he went on. I admitted it. "What is a Socialist?" I tried to tell him. "Do you think you'll

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ever become an anarchist?" he asked. I assured him that it seemed most unlikely. "Well, if you were to become an anarchist," he said facetiously, "would you throw a bomb at Dr. Baker?" On my protesting that Dr. Baker's name would not be the first on my list, he smiled and I left.

This winter a few members of the faculty signed a letter protesting the proposed expulsion of John Strachey. Three names, mine included, were given to the press. It is common knowledge that the other two men whose names were known were subjected to considerable pressure by members of their respective departments. Nothing was said to me, though it was no secret that I had taken the lead in preparing and circulating the protest.

THE issue, in short, has never been squarely faced. The administration does not dare say, "We are firing Granville Hicks because he is a Communist." The administration does not dare say, "No Communist can remain on the faculty of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute."

I want the issue faced because I want it understood that Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, like practically every other institution of higher learning in the country, is an integral part of the capitalist system. Its trustees are business men or engineers who are closely identified with business. Many of its faculty are consultants for public utilities and other big industries. Most of its older alumni are employed in executive positions in business enterprises. Its endowment comes from capitalist enterprise and is invested in capitalist enterprise. Of course it has a stake in capitalism.

If all this were admitted, no one could be surprised, no one could be indignant, because R.P.I. refused to employ a Communist. But it is not admitted. The Institute—again like most institutions of higher learning— professes to believe in freedom of speech and action. It pretends that any competent teacher can serve on its faculty, regardless of his political and economic opinions.

Unfortunately, some persons are deceived by these pretences. They believe that there is such a thing as academic freedom in America. It is true that some colleges tolerate a heretic or two, but not because they want to. Either the heretics are harmless and therefore useful in giving a semblance of reality to the myth of academic freedom, or else they are retained because the colleges are afraid to fire them. The administration of any college that has a radical on its faculty is constantly under fire from the business men on its board of trustees and among its alumni. On the other hand, if it fires the radical, it will be attacked by all other radicals and by those liberals who actually believe in academic freedom. College administrators as a rule have very little stamina, and they bow quite readily to the greater pressure from the right.

Today capitalism is exerting a stronger and stronger pressure. Mr. Hearst has given the signal, and though the average college president hates Hearst, he yields to the forces Hearst represents. My "release" is not an isolated incident. There have been investigations at Commonwealth and the University of Chicago. President Ruthven of the University of Michigan has put a drastic curb on undergraduate activities. Connecticut State College announces that it will fire any teacher or student who criticizes the military training courses. The secretary of the Columbia Alumni Federation points out the cost in dollars and cents of campus ralicalism, and Nicholas Murray Butler concocts a miraculous definition of academic freedom. Vigilantism appears on a dozen campuses. State after state enacts oath bills and other repressive laws.

It is no wonder that the more outspoken radicals are being "released." They probably are being "released" from the academic profession. If a college professor pretends to accept the official excuse and keeps quiet, he may possibly get a chance elsewhere. But if he insists on bringing the issue into the open, if, for example, he admits that he is a Communist, no college will take him. If there are any college presidents who really believe in academic freedom, they are too busy battling their trustees on behalf of the radicals they already have to take on any more. (I hope I am wrong. If I am, any college president who wants to prove it can have both my apologies and my services.)

The only possible defense against pressure from the right is pressure from the left. Teachers are too unorganized to defend themselves. The defense must come from outside. Whether my job is saved or not makes relatively little difference, but I know that the more protest is raised the safer every other academic radical will be. I do not have to ask the radicals to protest; they will do so anyway, for they understand exactly what the issues are. As for the liberals, though I disagree with them, I do not hesitate to ask for their aid. From their point of view, the preservation of academic freedom is the principal hope of civilization. Fortunately for my peace of mind, my own hope for the future has other—and, I think, stronger—foundations.

Hicks—the Man They "Could Spare"

BRUCE MINTON

TROY, N. Y.

ON THE hill in back of Troy, N.Y., overlooking the factories, is Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. According to the catalogue, it is "the oldest institution of higher learning in any English-speaking country that has devoted itself continuously to instruction and research in science and engineering." The buildings are pretentious—imitations of Harvard, brick colonial structures adorned with white woodwork and white classical columns. Each year Rensselaer graduates "business engineers," who go out into the world with ideals that the highest service a Rensselaer alumnus can perform for country and for alma mater is to become president or director of a large corporation and there institute engineering methods tempered by sound business practice. Those who have succeeded have been honored: Mr. Vorhees, vice-president of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, became a trustee; so did Safford Colby, vice-president of the Aluminum Company of America; and Edwin Ames, president of Hone and Co. Herbert Hoover, the "great engineer," was given an honorary degree, claimed as Rensselaer's own and every attempt has been made to obtain him as President of the Institute.

In this school of "practical learning," little emphasis has been placed on cultural education. True, the acting director of the Institute has a Ph.D. from Harvard in English Literature. Dr. Baker has made mighty efforts to rectify the weakness in Rensselaer's curriculum. He persuaded the Board of Trustees to create three new departments which Dr. Baker now looks upon as his special provinces. These were — a department of English, a department of biology, and, oddly enough, a School of Business Administration. To the department of English six years ago, Dr. Baker appointed a young Harvard graduate, Granville Hicks, as Assistant Professor.

Rensselaer offers no degree in literature. The English department supplements the work of the engineering and special schools. Granville Hicks turned out to be more than an instructor of business correspondence, more than a lecturer in the history of English and American literature. He was known for his contributions to scholarly journals, for his essays on modern American writers in weekly magazines, for his book, *The Great Tradition*. He taught his classes efficiently; there was no criticism on that score. And more,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his name became identified with the Institute and gave it a reputation for harboring a scholar of national reputation. Dr. Baker basked in Hicks' glory. For after all, Baker had obtained Hicks for Rensselaer. Baker had brought the "Harvard tradition" to Troy, and Baker headed the department in which Granville Hicks was an assistant professor.

Yet this year, in the second week of May, Hicks was summarily dismissed. He was dropped from the teaching staff without warning; in view of the short notice, he was "granted" a half-year's salary. The reason given was "retrenchment."

Hicks wasn't surprised. Three years ago he had supported the Communist candidates, Foster and Ford, in the national presidential election. He made no secret of the fact that he considered himself a Communist. He had never been criticized for his political beliefs: twice the administration had questioned him, but had only "suggested" that he continue to carry on his courses the way he had in the past — without indulging in political propaganda. But when Rensselaer decided to retrench, Hicks was the man singled out to go. Of the other three professors and three instructors in the English Department (none of whom has any distinction in his field), Hicks was selected as the one who could be spared "most easily."

Business Man to "Educator"

THE dismissal came from the Prudential Committee. Rensselaer is run by a Board of Trustees, which in turn hands over all power to what is called the Prudential Committee of three men. Usually, the President and the Director of the Institute sit on this Committee. But last December Palmer Ricketts, who combined both offices, died and his place has not been filled. Dr. Baker took over the position of Acting Director though not the place on the Committee. Mr. Edwin Jarrett, second vice-president, became the acting executive.

Besides Jarrett, the Prudential Committee includes Sanford Cluett, vice-president of the Cluett, Peabody Company, manufacturers of Arrow collars and shirts; and Royal Finch, consulting engineer in Albany. Mr. Finch is also a member of the New York State Board of Licensing for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors. All three members of the Committee belong to the University Club in New York City. Mr. Finch and Mr. Cluett are Republicans and Episcopalians, and with Mr. Jarrett, have reputation for being sound business men. But Mr. Finch and Mr. Cluett take only a nominal interest in the Institute's affairs. Mr. Jarrett, retired, wealthy, likes the idea of ending his days as an "educator." He has an office in the Administration Building, carries on the tradition of Rensselaer and like the honorary alumnus, Herbert Hoover, brings practical knowledge of corporation finance and investment to government—in this case, the government of an educational institution.

I called on Mr. Jarrett. He sat at a huge desk in a huge room. He was very busy with a lot of papers, but when he learned I was not selling insurance he leaned back and told me to sit down.

"Mr. Jarrett," I said, "I represent THE NEW MASSES. We have just learned that Mr. Granville Hicks, who is an editor of the magazine, has been dismissed after six years of service at Rensselaer. He was dismissed without previous warning, though at no time was there any criticism of his work or his ability. Can you give us an explanation?"

He looked over his half-glasses and tapped on the desk. "Mr. Hicks was not 'dismissed,' he was only 'released.' He was released because we must retrench. Our enrollment has dropped from 1,700 to 1,200 and next year we expect about 1,100 students. Our income has been cut tremendously. The danger signals are out."

"Yes, but how did you happen to select Granville Hicks? After all, he has a national reputation in his field—"

Mr. Jarrett raised his hand. "You must remember that I am a business man. And that this is a technical school. Mr. Hicks' position in the field of letters has little bearing on his ability as an instructor."

"He's been here six years. There has been no question as to his ability up to now?"

"There isn't any now. No reflection on his ability. But I repeat that an outstanding intellectual giant has little bearing on his value as a teacher in a technical school." Mr. Jarrett thrust out his lower lip and tapped on the desk.

"Has there been any other retrenchment, Mr. Jarrett? Anybody except Mr. Hicks?"

"Of course. Plenty."

"Any other professors?"

"Yes, professors."

"Could you tell me who the professors were?"

Mr. Jarrett blinked. "I don't know offhand. I'm sure there were other professors—"

"Isn't it the usual thing to give a professor notice of dismissal by February so that he can look for another appointment?"

"I don't know. But in December our president and director, Mr. Palmer Ricketts, died and things have been very upset. We didn't get to many problems—we offered Mr. Hicks a half-year's salary."

"You didn't reply to his letter asking for an explanation."

"There is no further explanation."

Matter of Mathematics

"NOW, Mr. Jarrett, you have dismissed Hicks at a time when it is impossible for him to get a position for another year. Why did you decide to drop Hicks and not an instructor who has been here a short time? Why didn't you save the money by cutting salaries throughout the department—after all, it is only $250 a year spread over six men."

"We took the most obvious step. We must have better financial stability. Of course, there are possible alternatives—but we took the way that seemed best. Hicks was the man we could dispense with most easily."

"Isn't it true that this retrenchment is costing you $500 next year instead of saving money? That all you save is $500 over a period of two years?"

"That's a matter of mathematics. There is nothing to discuss."

"Well then, Mr. Jarrett, perhaps you can give me some sort of explanation on the following point. Mr. Hicks has not denied supporting the Communist Party in past years. Is his dismissal based on his political views?"

Mr. Jarrett sat up and began massaging his bald head. "Absolutely not! We have other professors with pretty pronounced political views. As long as a man doesn't carry his views on to the campus—of course there are individuals on the campus who don't feel that way. There are individuals and groups who don't like the Communists—" he looked at me and hurried on, "but they don't affect me. We also have representatives of the entrenched classes. They don't affect me either, so long as the man is a good teacher."

"But Mr. Hicks was a good teacher. Besides he had a reputation for scholarship and achievement. His political views did not enter into your decision. He has been here six years. How did you happen to select Hicks? Why not someone else in the department of less value to the Institute?"

"I have already answered that question as fully as I care to."

"I see. But there's one other question. Before Mr. Ricketts died he made a statement concerning tenure of office of assistant professors. He said, 'the professor must have proved his competency as a teacher . . . have established a reputation by original investigation or consulting experience of a high order, and have contributed to the literature of his subject.' Hicks has done all these things, more so than the other professors in the department."

Mr. Jarrett shrugged. "I am a business man. I'm not a judge of professors . . ."

"Besides, the report goes on: 'Each appointment, terminable by either party upon a year's notice, will be made for a period of three years. In general, no appointment will be renewed for another period unless the appointee has continued to extend his knowledge and to enhance his reputation.' "

"I never heard of that," said Mr. Jarrett.

"Yes, but you admit that according to this official report, Hicks was led to believe his appointment could only be terminated by a year's notice—he got about a month's—and that since his appointment was renewed each year over a period of six years that he could expect employment for at least three years."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I don't know anything about that statement. I never saw it before. Hicks had a year's contract. We say nothing about warning or about tenure. He has been relieved of his work because we must retrench, danger signals are out, our income has been cut tremendously. I am a business man. The fact that a man is well-known has little to do with his efficiency as a teacher. I have never looked into Mr. Hicks' record for efficiency. Perhaps if I did—"

"Nothing to Say"

I LEFT. Across the hall is Dr. Baker's office, the acting director of the Institute, head of the faculty and head of the department of English. Dr. Baker was very cordial. He had that cultured friendliness of a scholar. Dr. Baker has spent his life in adding to knowledge. He has written books —among them *A Tale of Rothenberg; Croynan Hall, the Maid of the Mask; Feathers with Yellow Gold.* And in the field of scientific research he has produced the famous *The Preparation of Reports,* a required textbook for all students at Rensselaer. I dipped into the book before seeing Dr. Baker. Some of the passages impressed me with the clarity with which Dr. Baker approached problems. For example, these sentences stick in my mind:

> For convenience, they [reports] can be classified as: (1) short, (2) long.
>
> As the late J. Pierpont Morgan often remarked, character is the finest asset, and only the expert who remembers this axiom is likely to estimate aright the soundness of any organization.

Dr. Baker was very, very friendly. When he learned my mission, he insisted on giving me a statement:

"I think very highly of Mr. Hicks' ability. I have nothing more to say about it."

"But after all, Dr. Baker, you appointed Mr. Hicks and Mr. Jarrett told me he knew nothing about the faculty. The recommendation that Hicks be dropped must have been known to you."

"I have nothing to say."

I asked him whether Hicks' support of the Communist Party might have some bearing on his dismissal. Dr. Baker had nothing to say about it. I asked him about his influence with the Prudential Committee, about how it was that Hicks had been selected above all others to be dropped, about Hicks' reputation. Dr. Baker would not answer. Finally I said, "Dr. Baker, I have picked up a little information here and there on the campus. Now some people say that Hicks is a radical and that since you appointed him you are responsible for his opinions. They say that you want to become President of the Institute and Hicks' presence here holds you back. What effect will Hicks' dismissal have upon your chances of becoming President?"

Dr. Baker leaned back and looked at the ceiling. "A pertinent question," he said. "Shall I speak off the record?"

"On the record."

"I have nothing to say."

"What about the exposé of The New York Times Book Section by Hicks, published in THE NEW MASSES? How was that received and what relation has that got to his dismissal?"

"Off the record?"

"On the record."

"I have nothing to say."

"Now, Dr. Baker. You're a Harvard man. Hicks is a Harvard man. I know your reputation for scholarship and your interest in culture. Isn't it a pity that you should lose so valuable a teacher who can contribute so much to your Institute?"

"I have nothing to say."

We talked about Harvard. Dr. Baker grew expansive. Great place. Lots of culture. Fine professors. I said, Hicks carries on that culture. Yes, Dr. Baker admitted, but Hicks has too limited a point of view. Undoubtedly, Hicks has made a contribution. But Dr. Baker had conceived the idea when he was eighteen of writing a cultural History of North America. A broad history, not limited like Hicks. It would take twenty volumes. He was working on it. Some day—

R. P. I. Holds up its Head

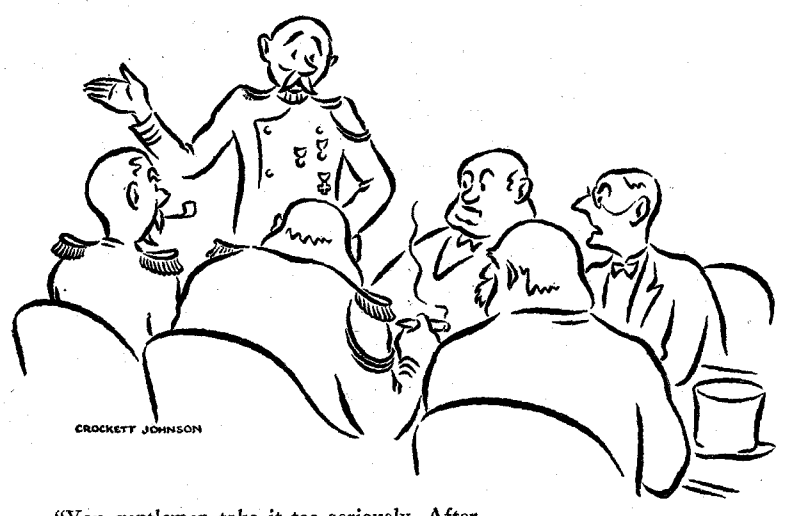
THAT was all. I talked to other members of the faculty. The engineering department was philosophical about Hicks' dismissal. Waste of money to support English professors. Mr. Lawson, head of the department, had never heard of Hicks. But he knew there was a necessity for retrenchment. Yes, a great necessity. Several instructors had been dismissed. I told him Hicks was a professor. Well, he guessed Hicks could be disposed of with benefit to all concerned.

He hadn't heard of Hicks, but, come to think of it, he *had* heard that Hicks was "Communistically" inclined, that he did a lot of lecturing and writing that was "Communistic." Well, that couldn't have anything to do with it. Not all all. By the way, what paper did I represent? THE NEW MASSES. That was Communistic too? I was a correspondent? What was my name? Was I living in Troy or Albany?

Lawton is the typical vigilante type. In California he would be in the Nationals or some similar organization. As yet, however, he has not sufficient excuse to mobilize the storm troops. Hearst hasn't bothered much about Rensselaer. The Albany paper didn't like it when Hicks organized a protest against deporting John Strachey and nine or so professors signed it. But there is no Red scare in Troy. There have been few labor troubles. The sweat shops continue to operate because of absence of militant unions. But the Board of Trustees, Mr. Cluett, Mr. Jarrett, Mr. Finch must have some awareness that they have been harboring a "Red" in their midst.

The professors at Rensselaer don't like to talk—things get back to the administration. But they did hint that there have been investigations quietly carried on about Hicks and about his Communist activities. Students have been questioned. For it is sometimes embarrassing to have a Communist on a faculty when all the trustees are in big business and the engineering students are brought up on the motto of their honorary alumnus, "Prosperity is just around the corner." So Rensselaer has decided to retrench. It costs them $500 to do so, they lose the outstanding man on their faculty, they look rather stupid. But they can hold their heads up when Mr. Hearst and the D.A.R. ask for a reckoning.

The tradition of Rensselaer remains unsullied. Ernest T. Weir, President of Weirton Steel Company, which is fighting its workers, oppressing them, blacklisting the militants, was asked to give the Commencement Day address. He couldn't be present. In his place, Major General Edward Markham, chief of army engineers, will celebrate the centennial of the granting of engineering degrees in an English-speaking country. Rensselaer carries on. Its one venture into the field of culture ends on Commencement Day when Granville Hicks is "released" from duty. Rensselaer will continue its tradition of free speech—made easier by ridding itself of the one man who had anything to say.



"You gentlemen take it too seriously. After all war is only a game—like chess."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Heil, Blue and Gold

VERA COX

The Students Essay Contest for a $100 prize donated by Mrs. Thomas Boyd ended May 10. The judges, Corliss Lamont, Henry Hart and Granville Hicks, have awarded the prize to Vera Cox, freshman at Redlands University, California, for her essay, "Heil, Blue and Gold," which appears below. Honorable mention is given to Robert Boehm, who wrote on "Militarism and Fascism in the Colleges"; R. Howard Bearden, for "Fascism and the Negro Student"; Maurice Horwitz, for "Fascism: Campus Edition," and Anna Sellers, for "Call out the Reserves."

Perhaps the most significant thing about the essays is that more than half of them were factual and described personal experiences. All dealt with some phase of the prescribed topic, "Militarism and Fascism in the Colleges."

If this contest has done nothing else it has shown that the young men and women in our colleges are keenly aware of the forces now fighting for power in the world. Also, that not all the repression and terror of our incipient fascism is adequate to stifle and stultify the young.

One final note, sufficiently ironical: "Vera Cox" is a pseudonym. If the authorities of Redlands University knew the identity of their prize winning student she would face expulsion.—THE EDITORS.

I STOOD alone on the steps of the library and drew a deep breath. The sun shone hotly on the campus, on the huge red buildings, on the green of the quad before me. A fitful breeze whispered through the trees and blew through my hair.

I sighed again. Registration, the exhausting struggle, was over. I was in college. Here I would find freedom of thought, freedom to learn, freedom to create and to act. I walked away, toward the gleaming pole flying the striped flag and clutched my registration card tightly.

A few weeks later I stood on the steps of Royce Hall, the building of knowledge and free thought across the quad from the library. Over three thousand others were milling about the steps. I listened as a boy spoke swiftly, eagerly to the noisy crowd. Suddenly we were no longer a curious gathering. Brawny athletes began shoving and pushing through to the speaker. Fighting began. Cops bobbed up from nowhere. Bedlam burst loose. Students jumped up to the steps, shouting to make themselves heard. Someone pushed a policeman into the bushes —he had struck a girl. Another cop seized a girl speaker, hurled her down into the shrubs.

Across the quad gleamed the wide windows of the Provost's office, where the trouble started, where the Provost was conferring with the suspended students whose belief in free speech and fight for a student-controlled open forum started the row and proved that the university was a "hotbed of Communism." Over here on the steps, the struggle went on. A boy was speaking now, speaking hotly and loudly, to the milling students. A group shoved toward him and closed threateningly around him; he was suddenly silent. A football star scrambled up the steps, shoved through a group of girls and thundered our Alma Mater song. Others took it up. Some students gawked stupidly for a moment and turned away with disgust on their faces; I never sang it again. There was no one to speak now, no one to be attacked. "Hail, Blue and Gold; our Alma Mater rejoices. . . ."

I gulped and turned away in wonder and anger. Why? Why the demonstration, the vicious attack, the violence of athletes and police? Five suspended students who believed in free speech—a man, head of the college of free thought, who did not—the quiet-voiced boy who spoke so eagerly, the girl who was attacked, the students who believed in acting on their belief in free speech and assemblage—and the fighting, the bitter attack on academic freedom—Why?

I was not the only student shocked to realization of the truth on that day. There were others, too, who awoke, who began to study their world instead of their books, who began to get an education. And we have learned much from bitter, surprising experience.

There is no such thing as freedom of thought, inquiry or expression on our campus. Liberty is throttled systematically and thoroughly by the administration and faculty, by their decrees, their threats of discipline, and their encouragement of student spies and vigilantes. Proof on the campus.

For those of us who awoke on that day were among the students who realized that the student strike against war and fascism is our one effective counterattack against those who seek to smash academic freedom. We drew together to work incessantly to build the strike on our campus.

Early in that work we sent a committee to explain our purpose to the Provost. Through the committee, we pointed out that the strike was not local but international, that it was the one concrete form of expressing student opposition to imperialist war and to fascism, that it was a preparation for participation in a war-paralyzing general strike to be called in case of war, that it was proof that students are sincerely determined to do more than talk about war and fascism and that it showed the unity of students throughout the world in their grim determination to prevent imperialist war and fascism. The answer was curt and expected: As far as I'm concerned, there is no strike; you are intruders, disrupting the peace of the university; the university is not responsible for what happens on April 12.

However, the work continued steadily as opposition grew more serious. Vigilantes came to anti-war committee meetings and tried to heckle; they grew silent when they found no answer possible to the educationals on war and fascism. Stool pigeons crept in; placed on leading committees, they vanished when they realized they were discovered to be spies. Threatening letters were sent to at least one student. Distribution of anti-war bulletins was driven underground by administrative surveillance and vigilante hall patrols. A girl was told to withdraw or be expelled by the Provost when a spy reported she handed leaflets to friends. The Provost prepared assemblies for the week before April 12 and forced outstanding liberal students to agree to speak at them. He called in leaders of the football squad, of the R.O.T.C. officers' club and of the vigilantes to plead for help; according to one of the group, he told them that the future of the university depended on them and that he would support them in whatever they did to save it. Student correspondents gleefully filled metropolitan papers with attacks on the "anti-warriors." In all, every force of ridicule and terrorism was brought to bear.

But the work still progressed. As we held weekly meetings, as we stealthily distributed five weekly and several emergency bulletins, as we spoke before fraternities and clubs, we rapidly learned to see the forces fighting us as identical with those used against workers, liberals and radicals—as identical with the whole trend toward fascism.

Long before April 12 we had come to recognize the attacks on us as definitely fascist, as part of the force used everywhere except in the Soviet Union by those in power to throttle any attempt to end their exploitation. Our campus fascism was only an echo of the fascism in play against workers who organize to fight for decent conditions, who organize that they may lose their chains. But it was a far-reaching echo, for it mocked and smashed that freedom of investigation, of expression and of action on which true education is based.

The attack grew even more bold during the week before the strike. Well-known student, faculty and off-campus "liberals" pleaded through the columns of The Daily Bruin that students ignore the strike. News of strike preparations was admittedly censored by the editor of the student paper. Across the city, students of other schools

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were suspended and thrown into jail for passing out strike leaflets. Events on our campus scheduled for April 12 included a special fashion edition of the school paper, an address by a dark-horse liberal, a track meet, a meeting of the Board of Trustees, mid-term exams and an all-university dance.

These last minute attacks were particularly well designed to distract attention from the strike. The appeal to liberal students by "liberal" leaders was typical of fascism's trick of disguising itself as a liberal, progressive movement aimed to help the masses. More obviously fascist were the open threats of the administration, printed in the student paper, and the whispering campaign of terror. All culminated in the frankly fascist outburst of the Ku Klux Klan on the night of April 11, when burning crosses were planted near the campus and threatening leaflets were tossed from speeding autos.

But this campaign only accentuated the determination to strike and the curiosity of previously uninterested students. In view of hastily made regulations, no legal fight against expulsions for meeting on the campus would have been possible; because of this, the strike meeting was held off the campus. Although the place chosen was a three-minute walk from the quad and was announced only by poorly-distributed leaflets at the last minute, a thousand students gathered on a vacant lot at 11 a. m., April 12, to join the thousands of other American students who on that day struck against imperialist war and fascism.

In the face of that assemblage, fascist forces crumpled. A few attempts to heckle and to sing popular songs met with icy silence from the majority of the crowd. The meeting was quiet, not emotional on the surface, but very solemn as resolutions pledging a continued fight against imperialist war and fascism were passed and the Oxford pledge was chanted.

This demonstration of solidarity with over a hundred and fifty thousand American students and with thousands of students throughout the world brought a new vision to the students—a glimpse of our strength and of the vital need for its use. From the fascists it brought only sneers of ridicule, a check-up on absences and a threat by the state legislature to investigate "subversive" activities on the campus.

The strike is obvious proof that students are awakening to the need for action against fascism, to the greater need for building a world without imperialist war and fascism. Students cannot avoid it. Organization—into the National Student League, into active radical groups; agitation—which teaches the need for organization; education—from militant action, from participation in the workers' struggle—these the student are beginning to use. In them lies our strength and our confidence of building a world without fascism.

Today I can stand on the steps of the library, looking out on the quad. But today it is with the realization that we students, uniting in sympathy and in action with the workers, can and will change the world. And I add my voice to the mighty shout:

"On to a Soviet America!"

Toward a National Negro Congress

ELEANOR RYAN

WASHINGTON, D. C.

"I GOT nowhere to go. . . . None of us got a place to go!"

Thus, bitterly, trembling with emotion, a grey-haired Negro sharecropper from Arkansas ended the story of the events that had brought him to Washington. He had been active in organizing the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. For that his house had been shot up one night while he crouched in the cornfield watching the mob led by a plantation riding boss. Inside, his wife hid under the bed. A child didn't duck fast enough. She will carry a bald streak on the top of her head all her life as momento.

Next day, friends warned the sixty-seven-year-old man that "they" were after him. He left. Following a two-day flight from home, part of which he spent hiding in terror like a fugitive slave before the Civil War, he had a paralytic stroke. His right arm is carried in a sling, symbol of his own helplessness.

He told the story at Howard University where, under auspices of the Joint Committee on National Recovery and the Social Science group of the university, some 250 workers, farmers and intellectuals discussed in a three-day conference the "Position of the Negro in the Present Economic Crisis."

The timeliness of the subject was emphasized by statistics quoted in the conference. According to Mr. Albion Hartwell, executive secretary of the Interprofessional Association for Social Insurance, about 50 percent of the Negro working population is unemployed (as compared with 20 to 25 percent of the white). Despite discrimination against them in granting of relief, 30 percent of Negroes in the United States in January, 1935, were in families receiving relief, as compared with 17.8 percent in October, 1933, when the New Deal got under way. Relief for Negroes in western and eastern cotton-growing regions averages two dollars less than that given to whites and runs as much as ten dollars lower. Negroes make up 20 percent of relief rolls in America, though they form less than 10 percent of the population. Unemployment for Negro males is 29 percent higher than unemployment for the total male population. Stories filling in the bare outline of these figures were told by some ten workers and farmers at the conference.

One speaker was a white sharecropper. "There's not much difference between a hungry white man and a hungry black man," he said. He had come with Negroes to tell the Agricultural Adjustment Administration in Washington of hunger and terror in Arkansas. Coincidence brought him to the conference. He, too, has been promised lynching if he comes back home.

"You jump into a fiery furnace in Arkansas when you try to organize Negro and white together. . . . Who's to blame for our conditions? I guess the sharecroppers are responsible for everything," he said with bitter satire. "We're responsible for overproduction of cotton, overproduction of pigs, overproduction of people.

" 'Why can't sharecroppers pay for farms?' they ask us over at the A.A.A. I'll tell you why. The landlord bought that land for $1.25 an acre. We cleared the land, planted and picked the cotton. It's rightfully ours. We did the work. I was born and raised in Arkansas, but never yet have I seen a landlord soil his hands in the fields. But under the Bankhead bill, we'll have to pay $50 an acre for that land."

A widowed Negro woman, tall, dignified, came to the platform. Like most of the other workers, she was not introduced by name. If landlords at home find out, she complained publicly, she too will never be able to go back. In a clear calm voice she told the audience that she had been making a meagre living on a sixty-acre farm in Alabama. Then came the cotton reduction program.

"We plow up our fields like they tell us to. But hardly any of us ever seen a parity check. I don't know whether a government check is white or black. The landlord makes us sign a slip of paper and he takes the money. He says if we don't sign we'll have to move. That's the way they got us to vote for the Bankhead Bill."

John P. Davis, executive secretary of the Joint Committee on National Recovery, who for two years has been fighting for a square deal for the Negro under the New Deal, declared in the opening address of the conference that countless numbers of sharecroppers have never seen a parity check, granted to them by law. On the plantation of Ed-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ward O'Neal in Lauderdale County, Alabama, he found literally hundreds of sharecroppers who had never received a cent for reducing their acreage. (But O'Neal, the week before the conference, was in Washington leading a delegation of 4,000 rich farmers who told the A.A.A. that it was bringing prosperity back to the farmer. President Roosevelt declared to these "once forgotten men" that opponents of the Bankhead Bill were liars. To get the full irony of the President's statements readers would do well to read in the April 15 issue of their newspapers, the text of Roosevelt's address.)

The conference at Howard had its proponents of the Bankhead Bill. Robert Kerr Strauss, Director of Rural Resettlement Program under Tugwell, and J. Phil Campbell, of the Rural Rehabilitation Division of the A.A.A. tried to defend the government's position. They didn't have much of a chance. The 250 delegates to the conference, representing a wide range of civic, religious, fraternal and other organizations, with one exception agreed that the Bill was no solution to the problem of the Negro on the land.

The exception was Frank Tannenbaum, once a radical, now a government apologist. Stung by the persistent criticism of the bill, he turned on its opponents cynically: "The trouble with you is that you want the millennium. There isn't any millennium. . . . You want justice. There isn't any justice. There isn't anything to hope for." His solution is that the Bankhead Bill is better than nothing.

Davis pointed out to him that not one of the sharecroppers at the conference was in favor of the Bankhead Bill.

The Bankhead Bill, Davis declared, would put the sharecropper on submarginal land, on farms too small to provide a decent living. It provides no assurance against discrimination because of race, organizational affiliation or political beliefs. It would be used as a wedge to separate Negro and white on the same economic level.

" . . . cropper no longer will be 'furnished' by the landlord. Relief agencies will not aid him, since he has become theoretically a property owner. With only a small capital, if any, and with elemental farm equipment, he will be expected to scratch a meagre existence out of his farm, as well as pay off the debt on the land and the taxes. Thus turned loose on barren land by a 'beneficent' federal government, he will be told to 'root hog or die.' "

More Negroes in the United States are engaged in agriculture, under conditions pictured by the conference, than in any other occupation—(36 percent of total Negro population). Nearly three-quarters of them are sharecroppers.

Farm owners, however, have fared little better under the New Deal. One farmer from Mississippi related a long and bitter story of persecution because he had dared complain to Washington about a landlord who tried to force him to give up his "bale tag" (government permit to sell cotton without payment of special tax). As usual, the rich farmer was able to influence the farm bureau of the locality.

"If you ever come around here again," snarled the federal representative, "I'll have you strung up to a limb."

The man was driven from his home, his livestock and land confiscated by the mortgage holder (though interest for 1936 had been paid) and his wife chased off the place. He has been threatened with lynching if he returns.

Effects of the New Deal upon the Negro industrial worker were summed up in one terse sentence by a Durham, N. C., tobacco worker. "A fourteen-cent increase in the price of fatback and a seven-cent increase for cornmeal wipes out any wage increase N.R.A. ever gave."

Another Negro industrial worker, A. W. McPherson, secretary of the rank-and-file National Emergency Committee of Amalgamated Iron Steel and Tin Workers' Lodges, stated, "The only good thing the National Run Around has done has been to draw Negro and white workers together."

Domestic service employs more Negroes (29 percent) than any other occupation except agriculture. A Negro organizer of the Domestic Workers' Union of New York, describing the plight of domestic workers, told the story of a housemaid who, unable to support herself and her child on four dollars a week, wrote to Mrs. Roosevelt.

The reply, signed by A. R. Forbush, chief of the N.R.A. Correspondence Division, and written in the name of Mrs. Roosevelt, states that "Because of the intimate relationship between employers and domestic employe," no code can be set up for domestic workers. But by way of encouragement to underpaid domestics, the letter contained Mrs. Roosevelt's assurances that on many occasions she and N.R.A. executives have pleaded with housewives to establish satisfactory working conditions. The letter from Mrs. Roosevelt said:

> Of course you will realize that domestic employes are in effect, members of the household. In return, the household's income directly effects them. The greater the individual household's income, the better wages its domestic employes will receive. This, as you will no doubt see, hinges on business prosperity. We are happy to inform you that the country's business levels are growing better each month. The gain made since last December has been remarkable. As these proceed, it is quite possible your present wage difficulties will automatically adjust themselves. Economic recovery is a tedious procedure at best. It may be a long time yet before we reach the 1928-29 level. Still, we are on the way.

She did not indicate which way.

With the possible exception of Tannenbaum, who looks not for a solution but for a palliative, and Kelly Miller, professor emeritus of Howard University, who cried out frantically against seeking anything beyond the boundaries of ". . . the constitution, democracy and Christianity," speakers admitted there is no solution to the Negro problem within the present economic system.

Dr. W. E. B. DuBois, on the one hand giving lip service to Marx and on the other hand dreading revolution and damning the Communists, takes refuge in an escape philosophy of "racial segregation." The Negro race is to leave the white race floundering in the whirlpool of the present-day crisis and seek its own salvation in a black society (existing within the framework of our present social order). This society is to be dominated by labor, according to Dr. DuBois. How this is to come about he does not say.

In sharp contrast to the visionary "economics" of Dr. DuBois there stands out the opinion of the majority of speakers that exploited Negroes must face and fight the present situation together with exploited whites.

In addition to personal opinion, the conference heard representatives of the Communist Party of America, the Socialist Party and the Workers' Party outline their programs for the Negro.

The Socialist Party's program for the Negro was stated in a paper sent by Norman Thomas. Referring to the temptation sometimes presented to the Negro people to play "practical politics" Thomas said, "By playing along with Mrs. Roosevelt, if not with Mr. Roosevelt, it looked for a while as if it might be possible to get a degree of support for a Federal Anti-Lynching Bill which in the hour when Democratic Senators from the South killed it, was emphatically not in evidence. . . ."

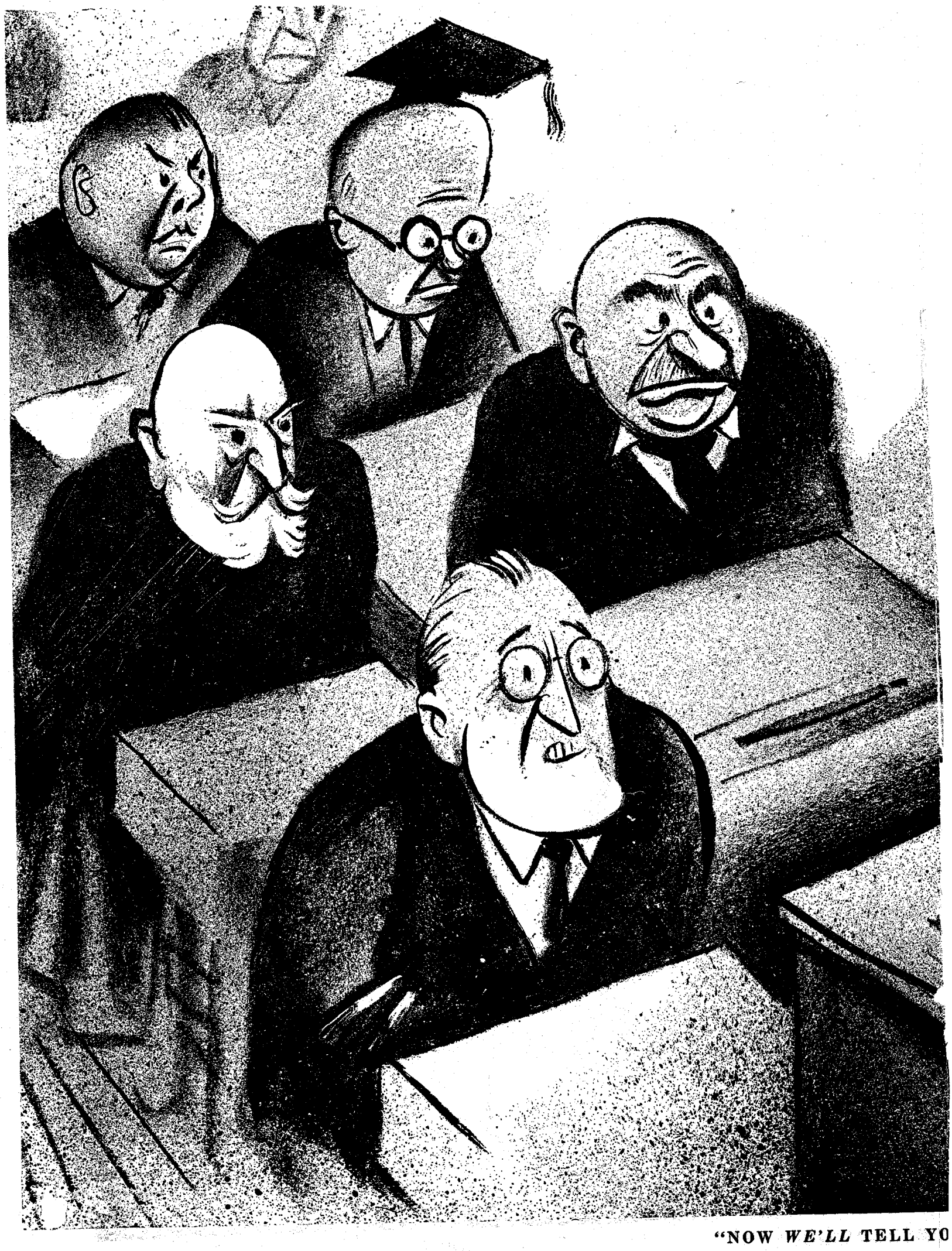
The Supreme Court decision upholding the right of the Democratic Party in Texas to exclude Negroes from its primaries "will be a blessing in disguise," Thomas said, if it compels Negroes to face the fact that they have no business "in the parties of their enemies."

James W. Ford, Communist candidate for Vice President in the last election, analyzed the theory of economic segregation for the Negro. It is supported, he declared, by a small Negro upper class which lives on the body of the segregated Negro community and opposes all efforts to wipe out segregation because it would mean destroying the basis of its wealth.

Emphasizing that the fight for Negro freedom and Negro rights depends upon the organization of the masses to struggle for their daily immediate needs, he warmly endorsed the calling of a broad National Negro Congress together with sympathetic organizations of whites, to work out a minimum program on which all mass organizations of the Negro people could cooperate.

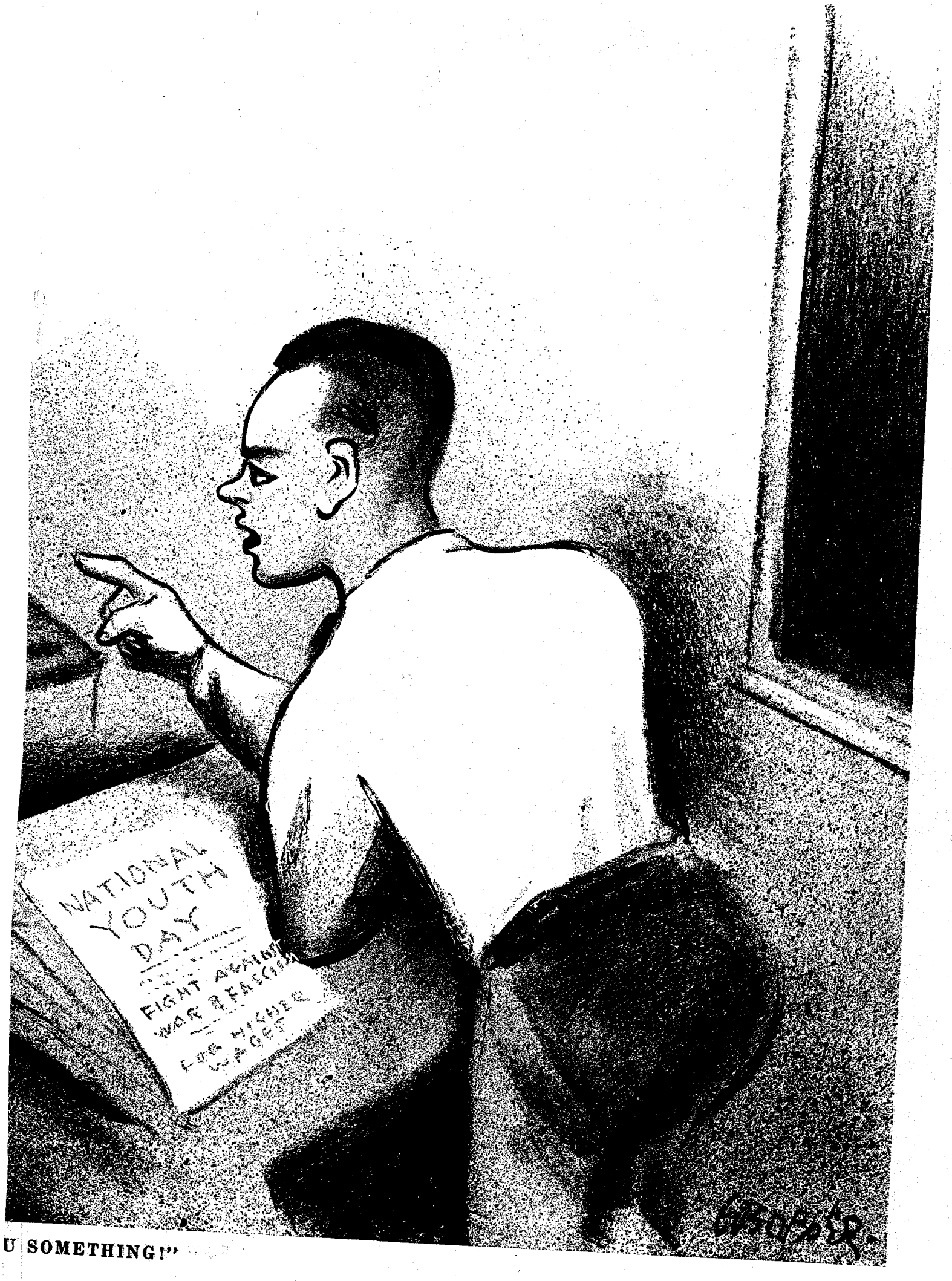
No specific program was resolved upon as a result of the conference. Working out of a definite program of action was left to the forthcoming National Negro Congress, which was endorsed by individuals representing a wide range of organizations. The conference set out to be merely a candid survey of the situation.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



"NOW *WE'LL* TELL YO

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



U SOMETHING!"

William Gropper

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What Is Communism?

5. What the Middle Class Will Gain from the Revolution

EARL BROWDER

ANSWERING previous questions about class relations and the role of various classes in the revolution, we made clear the reasons that socialism can only be inaugurated by the rule of the working class. Now we must give attention to a series of questions that have been asked about the position of the middle classes. We begin with the following:

> It may be very correct that only the working class can defeat capitalism and set up another system. I don't question that. But why should you expect that any middle-class groups will help the workers do that job? Take the farmers, for instance, a more hopelessly individualistic, private-property-loving group would be impossible to find. Imagine them helping abolish private property?

We take the farmers, as proposed by our correspondent; what do we find? Are they individualistic? Undoubtedly they are, so long as they find it possible to be. The average farmer, producing as an isolated unit, connected with the economic structure of society only through the market, selling and buying, is by necessity individualistic. The different social characteristics of men are the product of their differing social environments. If the farmer is able, through this market connection, to satisfy his needs, to find a comfortable life for himself and family, he will in a vast majority of cases be a contented, law-abiding citizen, giving full support to the existing system, without asking much about what is happening to his brothers. From the well-to-do farmers the working class can expect little or no help. We have already pointed out that it is to the poor farmers, making up the great majority, that we look for revolutionary allies.

The individualistic training of the poor farmers is modified and partly overcome by a whole series of experiences. True, he also is dependent upon the market, but he finds the market a cruelly powerful instrument of his exploitation; he sells at the prices offered and buys at the prices asked; he is the helpless creature of the market, which he learns is highly organized. He feels the heavy hand of Wall Street there. He is exploited directly by finance capital, in heavy interest charges on his indebtedness, for only by borrowing money for more working capital is he able to compete in the market at all. Almost all poor farmers also have heavy mortgages on their farms, contracted at a time of high valuations, the interest on which skims off the cream of their production. Or else they are landless tenants, working the land of the landlord (usually absentee or corporate), at rack rents running as high as 50 percent of the crop of share-croppers. Faced with these conditions, which uniformly oppress large masses, and against which nothing at all is even slightly effective except the action of masses, the poor farmers are beginning to learn the lessons of solidarity, of joint action. After years of efforts at cooperative marketing, without success because all the cards are stacked against them, they are now turning to mass strikes, mass demonstrations, mass political actions. From that it is only another step to the search for allies, a search which brings them to the working class.

All farmers are lovers of private property, that is true. But they do not love private property "in general"; they love their own property and that which they might hope to add to their own. But the capitalist system is no longer any protection to their property. On the contrary, it is capitalism that has destroyed their hope of adding to their private possessions, and even that which they have is piece by piece being taken away from them. So the very love of private property, which in former times made even the poor farmers a solid conservative force, is today working in an opposite direction, is revolutionizing the poor farmers.

What have these poor farmers to gain through a working class revolution? Everything! A workers' government would secure them in possession of their land, which capitalism takes or threatens to take away. It would cancel their indebtedness, which now hangs like a millstone about their necks. It would abolish the exploitation of the marketing trusts, which now absorb four-fifths of the retail prices of agricultural products. It would provide production credits, machinery and seeds, on easy terms. It would make possible the building of voluntary cooperative farms on a giant scale, to bring the farmers all the advantages of machine mass production. It would bring the advantages of city life to the country side, with a rich and full cultural life, made possible by socializing agricultural production. Many of the benefits would flow, immediately, out of the coming to power of the working class and all of them would follow quickly with the building of socialist industry.

The poor farmers will gain a rich and prosperous life from the revolution; they lose nothing but the chains of their present degredation, against which they are already in revolt. All the most intelligent among them, the vanguard, already see this. Masses of them are beginning to understand it. The majority will, before long, have their eyes opened by the combination of bitter experience with capitalism and the educational work of their more progressive brothers.

The majority of the farmers are the natural and inevitable allies of the working class, in overthrowing capitalism, and building the socialist society.

WHAT about the city middle classes? We have a flood of questions about the probable position of the various groups, engineers, technicians, professionals, teachers, small businessmen, etc., in the new society. Let us briefly examine the problems of each of the main groups.

Engineers and technicians constitute a large and economically important, middle class grouping. They are among the hardest hit by the crisis. Capitalism holds out not the slightest hope for their occupation; even the return of prosperity in terms of 1929, which few longer even hope for, would not re-employ half of them. They have been "overproduced," so far as capitalism is concerned. Their full re-employment depends entirely upon the victory of socialism, the only system that can make full use of all productive forces. In addition to their economic interest in a successful revolution, their interest and pride in their craft impels them to socialism. All that stands in the way of winning most of them to the revolution is the still colossal social-economic illiteracy prevailing among them, due to capitalist education and environment.

Teachers are another large and functionally important group. A large part of them are properly classed with the proletariat, even though the special influences that mold them have given most of them a middle-class psychology. They are also an "overproduced" group under capitalism, being about 20 percent unemployed. For a majority, their economic conditions are miserably low, below that of the employed skilled factory worker. Their conditions of work, under the tyranny of a system of business-men Boards of Education and Boards of Directors, oppresses and drives out the progressive and fearless minds among them and elevates to ruling posts the Babbitt types, like President Robinson of City College of New York. Their only hope of economic security and self-respecting conditions of work is the success of the socialist revolution. That they can confidently expect such a position in a socialist America is witnessed by the enormous expansion in education in the Soviet Union and in the high place education occupies even today within the revolutionary movement.

As to the so-called free professions (physicians, surgeons, dentists, lawyers, writers,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

artists, etc.), their conditions of life and work would be fundamentally changed in a socialist society. The organized public health services would absorb most, if not all, of the physicians, etc. Writers and artists would more and more be drawn into the great socialized educational and cultural system, under the direction and patronage of the Workers' State, the trade unions, etc. Their present status of "free" professions, which means freedom to sit around waiting for private practice and fees, which for a majority of them means starvation while their professions are stultified, with the masses denied their services, would be superceded by the status of *organized* professions serving an organized society. The only group in this series we can hold out very little hope for is the lawyers. God only knows what they will be good for in a socialist society!

Even the small business men have much more to gain from the revolution than they can possibly lose. Most of them are already on the verge of ruin from the competition of the chain stores, which now occupy about 25 percent of all retail business. Even now most of them would be glad to surrender their "independent" positions to take a post as manager of some well-established chain. To enter the service of a Workers' Government, which is organizing the whole of distribution, would be to improve both their economic and social positions.

What we have said about all of these groups applies to the main body of their members, but not to all. In each case there is an upper stratum, closely tied up socially and economically with the ruling capitalist class, which ties it up for good or ill, better or worse, life or death, with the capitalist system. There is another section, demoralized, impoverished, brutalized, by the present system, which cannot possibly march forward to the new society together with the workers, but which seems destined to provide the storm troops for the fascist last stand of capitalism. The task of the revolutionary movement is to reduce both these groups to their smallest possible proportions.

ALL of which brings us to a question, often asked in a variety of forms, in middle class circles:

> Since Communist (or socialist) society is in the interest of the great majority of the population why do you insist upon calling the changes a working-class, or proletarian, revolution? Why not call it a peoples' revolution?

In the broad sense of serving the best interests of the great majority, the socialist revolution is a peoples' revolution. The revolutionary movement is similarly a peoples' movement. Every great revolutionary upheaval in history has been, and must be, a peoples' revolution. So in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the bourgeois revolutions were peoples' revolutions.

It is, however, precisely for this reason that it is necessary to insist upon the working class, the proletarian character of the socialist revolution. This revolution is not a smooth, painless, peaceful slipping over from one stage of society to another. It is a struggle, bitter, stubborn, protracted, painful. The old, rotten, dying society does not let go; it holds on to humanity by the throat, determined that if it must die, then the human race must die with it. The revolutionary movement, which must break this death-grip of the dying capitalist class in order to rescue the human race from destruction, must itself be strong, fearless, stubborn, persistent, enduring, bold, self-sacrificing, enthusiastic, intelligent, clear-headed and bound for an unshakeable, steel-like unity. Because of its position in the present-day society, where the very process of production itself prepares it for its tasks and places the strategic positions in its hands—once it is organized and conscious of its tasks—the working class, and only the working class, possesses these qualities and can therefore assume these tasks.

That is why, when the slogan of "peoples' revolution" is raised to avoid these problems, to slur over or hide the necessary role of the working class, we Communists must oppose it and explain over and over again, patiently but persistently, the *proletarian* character of the socialist revolution. At the same time, it is the Communists who, always and everywhere, put forward the task of rallying the majority of the people in alliance with the working class, finding for each group and each individual his place in the struggle and in the new society, thus making the *proletarian* revolution at the same time, in reality, a true *peoples'* revolution.

NOW we come to another set of questions, which our readers have asked us. A multitude of these questions can be summarized in the following:

> Cannot this social transformation best be achieved through existing democracy and the ballot? Why do you Communists insist so much on force and violence as the means to achieve your ends? What is all this talk about the dictatorship of the proletariat? Should we not be the enemies of dictatorship and in favor of democracy?

We Communists have studied history carefully. We have failed to find a single instance in all history in which power has been transferred from one class to another, involving a change in the whole economic system, by means of balloting or any other method of formal democracy. We find that our own United States was able to come into existence only as the result of a successful, though bloody and costly War of Independence. We find that even such a change as the elimination of chattel slavery from one section of the country, and the consequent opening up of the whole country to the unchecked development of capitalism, required four years of destructive civil war. American examples can be duplicated in every other country. And in the past years we have the supreme example of Europe. In every country where capitalism is facing a probable overthrow by rebelling masses, there we witness the emergence of fascism right out of the womb of our boasted democracy. Fascism is truly the enemy of democracy. It devours it in the most bloody and bestial reaction the world has ever seen. But we have no single example yet of this existing democracy destroying fascism. On the contrary, everywhere that capitalism is facing a life-and-death crisis, this democracy gives birth to the fascist child that destroys it.

We Communists, as Stalin so well said in his interview with Wells, do not idealize violence. A violent struggle with the old capitalist system is by no means our choice. We know only too well the terrible price the workers pay, as the result of capitalist violence, every day and not only during revolutionary unheavals. We would be only too happy if the bankrupt capitalists would give up their weapons of force and violence, which they use against the population at home and are piling up in ever greater amount for international war. But we would be not only fools, we would be criminals, if we should tell the toiling masses to expect that capitalists will peacefully submit, step off the stage of history and allow the human race to move smoothly to a new and better society. We know they will not. We know that the more capitalism is unable to operate, the more it must starve the masses of the people, the more fiercely will it use force and violence to keep down the rising discontent, the more frantically will it snatch away from the masses even those formal democratic rights which it granted at a time when it felt more secure. Even in the United States, the classical land of bourgeois democracy, almost all the authoritative spokesmen for the ruling class have openly declared that, rather than allow any fundamental change in the economic system, they will cancel all democratic rights and pass over to open fascist dictatorship. Already under the Roosevelt administration enormous strides in this direction have been made. Martial law and fascist terror against the San Francisco strike last summer gave a sample of the whole future course of the capitalist class. And can anyone, even the most optimistic pacifist, tell us that the Southern white landlords will ever peacefully grant democratic rights to the Negroes, not to speak of land?

Our democratic rights in essence are only the right to choose between the different nominees of the capitalist class. That is, we have democratic rights so long as we do not use them against capitalism. The moment sufficient masses begin to use these democratic rights to go beyond the interests of capitalist profits, we will suddenly find a state of emergency has been declared and democratic rights have been indefinitely suspended. This democracy is real only for the capitalists as among themselves, individually and in groups. It is a dictatorship against the workers and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the toiling masses. It is the dictatorship of the capitalist class.

For the workers to gain for themselves a real democracy, it can only be together with a dictatorship against the capitalists. Just as the capitalists enjoy democracy among themselves only by suppressing the toiling masses, so these masses can only enjoy democracy by suppressing the capitalist class. Democracy and dictatorship are, therefore, not two opposing systems, in general. They are like the two poles of a magnet. They always go together. The only question is: democracy for whom? Dictatorship against whom? We Communists propose to reverse the present relationship in this respect.

In my speech before the International Industrial Relations Institute Conference on Social-Economic Planning last November, I had occasion to mention this question. Allow me to quote a few paragraphs from that speech:

> Capitalist crisis finds its supreme example in the present condition of the capitalist world. It can be solved only by destruction and violence. If the conditions of bourgeois property are to be maintained, this can only be accomplished by the destruction of the excess wealth and productive forces, and the most violent suppression of the suffering masses who have no interest in such property. If the productive forces and accumulated wealth of society are to be preserved and further developed, this can only be accomplished by the destruction of bourgeois property rights and of the institutions by which they are maintained, with the necessary accomplishment of suppression of the exploiting minority and their agents.
>
> Thus, some form of violence and destruction are unavoidable. This is not something to be chosen or rejected. The only choice is between the two sides of the struggle.
>
> If bourgeois property wins the immediate fight, at the expense of the masses of the population and by destroying vast wealth and productive forces, this by no means represents any permanent solution of the problem. It only reproduces the contradictions on a higher scale, with a more violent crisis ensuing. That is why the more successful are the immediate policies of Roosevelt, for example, the deeper grow the general difficulties, contradictions and antagonisms.
>
> But if the progressive forces in society overcome bourgeois property, then history leaps forward to a new and higher stage. Then a planned utilization of the full productive possibilities once and for all release humanity from the tryranny of man over man and of nature and things over man; mankind emerges into the era of freedom.
>
> This is possible because today, as distinct from past revolutionary periods of history, the revolutionary class is the working class, which is itself the greatest productive force, which is the foundation of society and which cannot free itself without freeing the whole human race.

Earl Browder's sixth article, next week, will deal with the Communist position in relation to religion and the churches.—THE EDITORS.

Questions from Readers

EARL BROWDER

About the Franco-Soviet Pact

Question: How does the Franco-Soviet Pact fit into a consistent Communist policy? Is the French Communist Party not placed in the difficult position of either opposing the pact or making peace with their own bourgeoisie?

Answer: None of the problems involved in the Franco-Soviet Pact are new in principle; the answers to all of them were worked out in the first years of the Soviet Power. This Pact is a concrete example of the Leninist policy of utilizing the antagonisms among the imperialist powers in order to promote the interests of the working class, of the world proletarian revolution.

But it is much more than this: It is part of the whole great structure of the *peace of the Soviet Union* which, while *utilizing* the imperialist antagonisms (not for war, but to maintain peace), rests upon the *foundation* of the *revolutionary mass struggle* against imperialist war in every country. In world politics today, proletarian diplomacy necessarily is directed toward making as difficult as possible the outbreak of imperialist war, toward isolating the most direct organizers of such war, toward providing rallying points—policies, slogans, banners—around which the mass resistance to war in all countries can concentrate.

All these objectives are served by the Franco-Soviet Pact. It increases the difficulties of Hitler fascism, together with its allies, which is the most direct and energetic organizer of war and is a big step toward its isolation; it provides immediate channels to direct the pressure of the anti-war masses in a practical way in the direction of peace. The work of the French Communist Party is therefore greatly helped, not hindered, by the conclusion of this Pact. Of course the parliamentary representatives of the French Communist Party will vote to confirm the Pact. But only an incorrigible Trotskyist counter-revolutionary could draw the conclusion, as did Ludwig Lore in The New York Post, that this means that the French Communist Party will follow this up by voting for the budget, for military credits and for the two year military service; it will do nothing of the kind. The class relations within France remain unchanged; the government is in the hands of the bourgeoisie; the French Communist Party will continue and extend not only its mass anti-militarist campaign, but also its efforts to win the majority of the French masses to overthrow bourgeois rule, to establish workers' rule, as the only real *guarantee* that the Pact will be carried out in life.

That the existence of the Pact facilitates the work of the French Communist Party was proved by the results of the recent municipal elections in which the united front of Communist and Socialist Parties made great advances which the whole world has recognized as the main feature of the elections. (Our American Socialist Party could learn much from this if it only were willing). The Pact furthers the interest of the German workers, by weakening the position of Hitler, as well as the interests of the workers of all lands.

It is a sorry commentary on the political capacity (or shall we say integrity?) of the "militants" in the Socialist Party, that The Socialist Call, while professing to stand for struggle against fascism and war, outdoes the "old guard" New Leader in its slander and misrepresentation of the Pact, finding the most fit person for this job in the renegade Gitlow. In this respect, the Socialist leaders and the renegades are again mechanically repeating their proven lies and slanders of the time of signing of the Litvinov-Roosevelt agreement on recognition. Remember how they then declared Litvinov had agreed to curb the Communist Party of the United States on Roosevelt's orders, just as now they spout their slanders that Stalin has delivered the French Communist Party to Laval! These gentlemen, specialists in agitation against the forces of revolution, conveniently forget that the Soviet Union has signed agreements with France and the United States, which, far from promising to "call off the Communists" in these countries, specifically declare that nothing of the kind will be done, that the Soviet Union will not interfere in the internal affairs of these countries in any way. The Soviet Union scrupulously keeps all its agreements. It is stupidity or malice which confuses diplomatic formalities, such as the "toast to the King" and so forth, with the substance of policy contained in the international negotiations and agreements of the Soviet Union, which is consistently proletarian and international in character. Even those tender souls who are outraged by the "toast to the King," should have found solace in the spectacle of members of His Britannic Majesty's Government standing at attention to the playing of the Internationale and drinking a toast to Soviet power!

Today the outstanding character of the Pact is that its is *an instrument for peace.* What role it will play if, in spite of all, peace is violated, flows from this character. We would be fools to think that the Pact, as such, really binds the French bourgeoisie to assist an attacked Soviet Union; but certainly it strengthens the hands of the French masses who *will* come to the defense of the Soviet Union.

As to Who is Practical

Question: Admitting that you Communists have the clearest idea of socialism and how to get it, is it not still true that the masses of workers are more interested in bread and butter—unemployment insurance, for example? Is not the criticism of Norman Thomas correct, that you are impractical people, engaged in making trouble rather than in solving the problems of the day?

Answer: Communists claim to be the most practical people in the world, not only in the fight for socialism but also in the fight for bread and butter. We welcome the test of examination of our work, in comparison with all other groups. Nowhere is this clearer than precisely the question of unemployment insurance, the most burning question of the day.

How does unemployment insurance stand in the 74th Congress now in session in Washington? There are two measures before Congress, the administration measure (Wagner-Lewis-Doughton Bill) and the Workers' Bill (HR2827). No one, not even its sponsors, pretends that the administration measure meets present problems; the most that is claimed for it is that it takes one small step in the direction of meeting unemployment problems some time in the future, provided capitalism recovers its "prosperity" in the meantime. (Communists deny even this small claim!). The Workers' Bill (HR2827), the only alternative in Congress, was written by the Communist Party. Not the "practical" people, take note, but by the "impractical" Communists! We are so "impractical" that we even organized a great mass movement in its support, a movement which brought such a convincing volume of testimony before the hearings of the Congress sub-committee, that that body reported favorably, recommending its adoption. This "impractical" Communist Party, still without a single representative in Congress, organized such a campaign for the Workers' Bill that it swung fifty Republican and Democratic Representatives to vote for it against the administration bill. Where was the "practical" Socialist Party in all this? They never could make up their minds as to which bill they stood for, not to mention their inability to work out any proposals of their own. Formally, the N.E.C. of the S.P. put itself on record, through a sub-committee, in the report on the Workers' Bill to Congress, *after the hearings were ended,* but the S.P. as a whole is still at sixes and sevens on the question. The most "impractical' observer ever invented, the fabled Man

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

From Mars, could hardly fail to conclude, if given the question of unemployment insurance as the test, that the only practical people in our 125,000,000 are the Communists and those who joined them in the campaign for the Workers' Bill.

As an interesting side-light on the question as to who is more practical, the Communists or Socialists, it may not be out of place to quote Norman Thomas, since our questioner has cited him as an authority. Mr. Thomas, in a circular letter sent out over the country on February 9, 1935, to a considerable number of his colleagues, had the following interesting comments to make:

> It looks as if we had escaped or delayed a split only to fall a victim of paralysis. With a few shining exceptions practically everywhere the Party is losing, not gaining morale. . . . Unfortunately, whether they were so intended or not, the actions of the extreme right-wing in New York have brought about widespread conviction that the Party is splitting, that it is futile and that at any rate, it is an adjunct of Roosevelt, notably in what it has said about the security program. . . . Already to an amazing extent we have lost what I may call the cultural field to the Communists in spite of their appalling mistakes. We are rapidly losing in many parts of the country in the political field to Long, to Dr. Townsend, to Upton Sinclair and God knows who else. . . . It may be a question whether it will be worth while to conduct a national campaign in 1936. . . . Among other things, as Chairman of the Finance Committee, I find it is a virtual impossibility to raise money from friendly sources because of the general belief that we are dead or dying.

These words of Mr. Thomas are far more drastic, cut much more deeply, than anything that we Communists would dare to say, on our own responsibility, about the "practical" situation of the Socialist Party. It would seem, from any practical viewpoint, that if, as Mr. Thomas says, the Communists have made "appalling mistakes," we would search the English language in vain for any word fit to describe those of the leaders of the Socialist Party, which have brought it to the pass described by the above-quoted colorful passages.

Correspondence

Walgreen—Adulterator

To The New Masses:

Mr. Walgreen, head of the Walgreen chain drug stores, wants true-blue Americanism taught in the American colleges. The enclosed bulletin issued by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, issued Feb. 25, 1935, page 287, case 22585, shows Walgreen's principles of rugged individualism:

> Adulteration of Elixir Iron, Quinine, and Strychnine, and adulteration and misbranding of Milk of Bismuth
> U. S. vs. Walgreen Co.
> Plea of guilty. Fine $100.
> Food & Drug No. 30319
> Sample Nos. 4339A-4345A
>
> that the Elixir Iron, Quinine, and Strychnine was adulterated in that it was sold under a name recognized in the National Formulary, and differed from the standard of *strength, quality,* and *purity* as determined by the test laid down in the National Formulary official at the time of investigation.
>
> Adulteration of the Milk of Bismuth was alleged for the reason that its strength and purity *fell below* the professed standard and quality under which it was sold.
>
> Misbranding of the milk of bismuth was alleged for the reason that the statement "STRONGER THAN THE N.F. PRODUCT." On May 17, 1934, a plea of guilty was entered on behalf of the defendant company, and the court imposed a fine of $100.

Down with the REDS—Long live Walgreen and his adulterations.

Brooklyn, N. Y. William Losak.

May Day in Berlin

To The New Masses:

I arrived at the Friedrichstrasse Station in Berlin early morning on May Day. Along the side streets squads of uniformed S. A. troopers could be seen, rounding up workers for the march. Clusters of S. A. men were posted at the station too. I approached one group, to ask about the demonstration. Whiskey-and-beer-laden breaths gave answer. Closer inspection of the men revealed that it was the "lumpen" elements who were drunk; most of the S. A. faces were sober and reserved, exhibiting no animation over the holiday.

On Unter der Linden was a solid cordon of S. S. men and police, through which only swanky official cars were permitted to proceed. Presently a feeble hurrah arose from the S. S. troopers. I looked. Goebbels, surrounded by heavily-medalled officers, dashed by in a sport-model Mercedes and responded with an aenemic smile. (The Mercedes firm has gratefully donated cars to all leading Nazis.)

My friend, a young (100% Aryan) worker in a paper mill, was still in bed when I called. Asked why he wasn't demonstrating, he replied "Do you think I'm crazy?" It took a good deal of persuasion to get him out on the streets. Templehoff Field was quite full. My friend explained that the workers from the big factories and firms were under strict compulsion to attend. Appearances confirmed this, for the masses stood around, entirely indifferent to the speech-making. Many attempted to leave the field, but were kept back by the police and detachments of Goering's "Feld-polizei." (This branch is noted for its extreme brutality). Snow and hail fell, causing dozens of undernourished working men and women to drop unconscious. Every few minutes another one was carried out on stretchers, followed by the angry eyes of workers. The end of Hitler's inane speech was greeted with perfunctory applause and a mad dash to get away from the whole mockery.

In the afternoon, groups of school-children were led by their teachers to Hitler's residence on Wilhelmstrasse. There they gathered under his window and called in chorus: "Liebe Führer, Zeige dich! Wir lieben Dich so sehr!" ("Beloved leader, show yourself! We love you so!") After the proper interval, the bullet-proof windows of Hitler's bomb-proof house were opened and the Fuehrer, with all the airs of a royal prima donna, made his gracious bows. The school children, together with about two hundred typical "Kleinbuerger" went into ecstacies. Not a proletarian face could I discern in the whole crowd—not a single worker's face!

In the movies, "Triumph des Willems" (title by Hitler) was being shown. From a technical-propagandistic viewpoint, the film is really a masterpiece. It is built up in such a way as to hypnotize the audience into participating in the scenes of mass frenzy which are screened. But nothwithstanding all the trickery, there was a marked absence of applause as the faces of Hitler, Herr Goebbels and Goering flashed on the screen.

As we walked about Berlin, my friend insisted that this May Day showing is the weakest Hitler has had. He pointed out that each year the mass support, even of the petty bourgoisie, is falling markedly. Later he took me to the homes of several of his friends, all of whom treated the "Tag der Arbeit" with contempt and anger. Those who had been compelled to march were angriest of all, and one of them vowed that next year they would have to "drag him out of the house with horses" before he would march.

All through the day, in the Wedding and other proletarian districts there had been spontaneous and lightning counter-demonstration. Thus, on many Wedding streets, red pillows and blankets were suddenly aired in front of houses and in courtyards. Or groups of young workers, marching along the streets, would pull off their jackets, revealing red pull-overs. After a block or two, upon a given warning signal, their jackets came on again and they melted away. Or a sudden "Achtung! Achtung!" would be heard, followed by a chorused shouting of revolutionary slogans.

In the evening, we visited several proletarian beer-halls in Neuköln and Gesundheitsbrunnen. Here, despite the presence of uniformed S. A. men and Nazi stools, not a single "Heil Hitler" could be seen or heard as the workers came and went. The air was strained with the hostility which was on the verge of erupting. In one place, there was an unusual liveliness, an air of tensely restrained mirth. We soon found out the cause: The pianist in the orchestra, struck two loud notes at the end of each piece. From the hall the response came from under the tables, each man stamping in unison with his feet. What did it mean? My friend, his eyes now gladly bright, nudged me and at once I understood! The two piano notes were the revolutionary salute "Rot Front!" and the responding stamping of approving feet was the fighting response. The spirit of May Day lives in Berlin!

Amsterdam, Holland. Mike Pell.

Letters in Brief

Irvin Schlein writes: "I wish to express my sincere appreciation for Malcolm Cowley's article. In all my reading of Marxian criticism never have I seen such a simple elucidation of the relationship existing between the artist and the revolutionary movement."

M. Blyne writes that the Workers Bookshop, 50 East 13th Street, New York, has published a nine-page "Guide to Readings in Communism" which can be used as supplementary readings in connection with Earl Browder's series. This guide will be sent by mail on receipt of five cents for postage.

The Relief Workers Organizing Committee, 11 West 18th Street, is greatly handicapped in its work by lack of the small amount of funds necessary for expenses, and sends us an appeal fer help.

Three other views of what the magazine should be like: From Phoenix, Ariz.; Clyde Fisher: "I would like to see a magazine built on the lines of Current History from a Marxist point of view. Why not serialize some Marxist classics?" From a reader in Portland, Ore.: "A short article each week on science and invention; on health under socialism; on decaying American schools; on civil liberties and world news in brief; also a revolutionary poem and a workers' song, notes and music; more about what is going on in U.S.S.R.; one page of cartoons each week." From Morris Halcobsky, New York: "I often wonder as to the reason why The New Masses does not contain more often beletristic material, be it in the form of a short story, miniature, etude or portrayal. Such reading matter, I believe, is very important and of great incentive especially to those readers who are not very familiar with political problems."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

REVIEW AND COMMENT

A Study in National Liberation

Formerly it was the "accepted idea" that the only method of liberating the oppressed nation was the method of *bourgeois nationalism,* a method of nations seceding one from the other, a method of disuniting them, a method of intensifying national animosities between the toiling masses of various nations. Now this legend must be regarded as disproved. One of the most important results of the October Revolution is the fact that it dealt that legend a mortal blow, having shown in practice the possibility and expediency of the *proletarian, international* method of liberating the oppressed nations as the only correct method, having shown in practice the possibility and expediency of a *fraternal alliance* between the workers and peasants of the most diverse nations on the principles of *voluntariness* and *internationalism.*—JOSEPH STALIN, *The October Revolution.*

THE October Revolution "inflicted a mortal wound on world capitalism" not only by withdrawing from the sphere of the capitalist system a vast country occupying one-sixth of the surface of the earth, not only by setting up the dictatorship of the proletariat in a country where the preceding, bourgeois-landlord government was one of the greatest imperialist world-robbers, and thus showing the way for the proletarians of all other imperialist countries, but also by liberating a great number of formerly oppressed nationalities that formed the colonial domain of the Russian Empire and thus setting the example for all colonial and semi-colonial peoples groaning under the iron heel of imperialism of how their liberation can be achieved.

The overthrow of the feudal system in a revolution for national liberation; the completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution immediately after the overthrow of the old régime; the passing, in rapid tempo, to a new, higher stage of the revolution where the battle is directed not only against the old feudal rulers but against private property in the means of production; the mobilizing of the peasantry as a whole against the feudal system, and the subsequent mobilizing of the poor and tenant farmers and agricultural laborers, hand in hand with the few proletarians of the cities, against private property while winning over or at least neutralizing the middle peasants; the industrializing of the country and the collectivizing of agriculture as the basis for socialism in a country which is thus skipping the stage of capitalist development—such are the phases of the revolution in the oppressed colonial countries formerly dominated by the Czar, such will be the course of the revolution in many now backward colonial countries of Asia, Africa and Australia.

In Central Asia the revolution was aggravated by a number of circumstances peculiar to that country. To begin with, the vast area was sparsely populated and the means of communication were mostly primitive. Great-Russian finance capital had not yet succeeded in introducing in that region even the most elementary prerequisites of a modern cultural life. Part of the region that was later the scene of the most intense revolutionary struggles was a vassal state nominally independent of Russia—the Khanate of Bokhara, even more backward than Central Asia under direct Czarist rule. The whole region was populated by a number of nationalities; Uzbeks, Tadjiks, Turkomans, Kirghiz, who harbored ancient enmities one against the other and who, in certain areas, inhabited one and the same territory. Added was the great distance from the centers of the Revolution in Russia proper and Siberia and the fact that the revolutionists in Central Asia, at the beginning at least, were mostly Russians, immigrants from Great Russia, who were not sufficiently acquainted with the conditions of the native populations and who did not enjoy the full confidence of the oppressed and exploited natives simply because they were Russians, *i.e.,* representatives of a nationality that had oppressed the natives for a long time.

Joshua Kunitz's book[1] is a valuable contribution to the history of the October Revolution in the English language—and will be a valuable contribution when translated into Russian—in that it gives in a concrete form the "why" and "how" of the Soviet Revolution in Central Asia as a revolution for national liberation leading to the revolution for the establishment of socialism.

Kunitz was one of a "literary brigade" that visited Central Asia in 1931 and made personal acquaintance with a number of districts of that unique land. Of the brigade, the novelist Bruno Jasiensky has since published a magnificent novel, *A Man Changes His Skin,* in which the main hero is the great irrigation canal completed by Soviet engineers as a means of reclaiming for cotton growing great stretches of the formerly hungry desert and as an instrument of collectivization. Louis Lozowick, another member of the brigade, made a number of impressive drawings of Central-Asian types and landscapes. Other works by members of the brigade have possibly been published with which the writer is not acquainted. Joshua Kunitz's book gives the sociology and politics of the revolution in the Central-Asian countries.

[1] *Dawn over Samarkand: The Rebirth of Central Asia,* by Joshua Kunitz. Covici, Friede. $3. Popular edition International Publishers, $1.90.

It is a good presentation, from the Marxian point of view, of the revolutionary developments in present Uzbekistan and Tadjikistan, with occasional reference to adjacent Kazakstan and Turkmenistan. It is a thorough and detailed account. But it is more than that. It has much in common both with the penetrating type-characterizations of the outstanding novelist, Jasiensky, and with the colorful and at times whimsical landscape-drawing of Lozowick. It is more than sociology and politics because there is an artistic quality in the method of presentation. Perhaps it is more correct to say that it is sociology and politics *made to live.*

KUNITZ takes us to the ancient city of Bokhara. We stroll with him through its outskirts. "There are gray streets, gray fences, gray walls, low, flat-roofed gray houses, all merged into one monotonous mass of corrugated gray, the same as they have been for centuries, hardened, immutable." We experience, together with him, that "queer sensation of timelessness—millions of days, thousands of months, hundreds of years—as silent, as soft, individually as indistinguishable as the vague silhouettes of the few veiled women who glide mutely along the walls . . . In the distance, in the pale blue haze, gleam the minarets, tiled in tourquoise and peacock colors. A stork rises from the gigantic cupola of a mosque and glides above the city . . . A *muezzin* calls the faithful to the morning prayer in the same tones, in the same words, as a thousand years before." Yet the local Bolshevik leader, Khodzhaiev, who is discussing with Kunitz Central-Asiatic affairs, warns him against expatiating on the beauty, the quaintness and the "mystery" of that land which is supposed to be akin to the land of the Thousand and One Nights. There is the new rising alongside the old. There is the battle between the old and the new. There are the marvellous advances of industry, agriculture, culture, sanitation, modes of living. The new is victorious. The new seems miraculous in comparison with the old.

How did it happen? What forces brought it about?

The bulk of the book is devoted to a narrative of the events centering around the former Khanate of Bokhara from approximately 1917 to the beginning of socialist construction by the end of the '20s. In the beginning we still see the Emir Alim Khan in his splendid palace, the spiritual and temporal ruler of his faithful people, the actual owner of the whole of Bokhara, the man who invested one hundred million rubles in Russian and foreign concerns. By the end of the book the Emir is gone, the *mullahs* are shorn

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of power and all but extinct, the beys have lost their possessions, the kulaks have been expropriated, most of the land has been collectivized and the output of heavy industries alone has increased from 140 million rubles in 1925 to 850 million rubles in 1934. In Uzbekistan, gross industrial production has increased from 300 million rubles in 1930 to 750 million rubles in 1934. The cultural advance is even more striking. There were 40,000 students in the elementary schools of Czarist Turkestan, of whom only 7,000 were children of natives, and the annual expenditure for education amounted to 10 kopecks per child. There were 997,525 children in the elementary and middle schools of Turkestan in 1934 and 1,023,700 grown-ups were attending classes for the liquidation of illiteracy. There was hardly a native university graduate before the Revolution. Today there are thousands of Uzbek, Khirgiz, Turkoman and Tadjik doctors, engineers, agronomists, scientists, teachers, and writers.

Much is to be learned from Kunitz's book, not only by the general public interested in understanding this phase of the Revolution which has been seldom depicted, but also by students of Leninism who wish to see Marxism-Leninism in practice.

Space permits only the mention of two phases of the Revolution as treated in this book—the question of national self-determination and the approach to the peasantry.

National self-determination, as understood by Lenin, meant the right of the oppressed nationality to form its own government and, if it so wishes, to secede from its former "mother country." This right of secession, said the April Conference of the Bolshevik Party in Petrograd (1917) must not be confused "with the question of the *expediency* of the secession of one or another nation at one or another moment. This latter question must in each separate instance be determined in entire independence by a party of the proletariat, from the point of view of the interests of general development and of the proletarian class struggle for Socialism." Another major premise of Leninism is that the proletariat of the more advanced country must lend its assistance to the masses of the formerly oppressed countries in order to help them build up their new national life. Real freedom, according to Leninism, can be achieved by a formerly oppressed independent nationality when it progresses economically so as to reach the level of the advanced countries.

All these moments of the Revolution in Central Asia have been brought into bold relief by Kunitz. When the power of the Emir was overthrown and the People's Soviet Republic of Bokhara was established in 1920, it chose *not* to join the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republics (R. S. F. S. R.—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was formed only in 1922). Kunitz correctly points out that this proves that the slogan of national self-determination is, for the Bolsheviks, not a propaganda slogan, that the nations liberating themselves under a Soviet government have the real right to choose their own affiliations.

Four years later, when it became obvious to the peoples of Central Asia that the country had to be divided into a number of states according to the nationality prevailing in a given territory, which division could not be accomplished without taking in part of the territory belonging to the R. S. F. S. R., the All-Bokhara Congress decided to join the R. S. F. S. R. and to create the states of Uzbekistan and Tadjikistan, with the Turkoman people of Bokhara entering into the composition of the Turkoman Socialist Soviet Republic. It was the free choice of the peoples of Bokhara, and it was brought about by expediency, not coercion.

The Bolshevik approach to the peasantry which, in countries of this type, must be the main force of the Revolution, is treated in Kunitz's book with competence and in detail. The history of the peasant movement in Central Asia is an added refutation of the Trotskyite "theory" denying the revolutionary rôle of the peasantry. In Kunitz's presentation we have excellent proof of the correctness of the Leninist line in the treatment of the peasantry. This correctness is particularly evident from the consequences of *mistakes* made by the Bolsheviks in Bokhara.

To win the peasantry as a whole it was the duty of the Revolution to expropriate the landed aristocracy, the beys. Because the Revolution of 1920 did not accomplish this immediately after the overthrow of the Emir, because even as late as 1922 there still existed "the right of the citizens freely to dispose of their movable and immovable property," the counter-revolution was able to harass Soviet Bokhara for several years. Because later the Soviet government undertook the land reform, expropriating the beys and the local kulaks, it won over not only the poor peasantry but also the middle peasantry. And because it showed to every peasant that there is a gain to be made by collectivization, it won over for this economic revolution the poorest strata of the peasantry while succeeding in keeping the middle peasants neutral. All this demanded clearsightedness, determination, tact. Above all it demanded activization of the peasants themselves.

KUNITZ'S book makes us live the history of the Revolution. It is amazing how he succeeds in focusing the attention of the reader on events in this remote corner of the earth in a manner that the fate of the Revolution, the vicissitudes of the class struggle, the successes of industrialization and collectivization become almost his *personal* concern. This is due to the artistic nature of Kunitz's writing. The types of the Bolsheviks carrying forward the Revolution in Uzbekistan and Tadjikistan are made real. The emancipation of the women of Central Asia, one of the most dramatic and colorful chapters in the book is presented through the biography of one typical leader of the woman's movement, the young and beautiful Khoziat who passed through all the stages of a typical oriental woman in the Revolution—from being sold by her father in wedlock, to running away from her lord and master, entering a Bolshevik girl's school, becoming a Bolshevik herself, and finally rising to a leading position in Soviet women's work. The difficulties, the tragedies inherent in the position of an emancipated woman of Central Asia where even some Communists reveal occasionally the "psychological aberration" of treating a woman without her veil (*paranja*) as a harlot, are not forgotten. We are "victims of the transition period," says Khoziat.

The last chapter, "Soviet Asia, 1934," reads like a poem in prose although it is only a series of quotations from official Soviet reports chock-full of figures. But then Kunitz knows the music of Soviet figures. He calls it "a Soviet rhapsody." Kunitz conceived the happy idea of making the former Emir Alim Khan, now a fur merchant in Cabul, listen in on the radio to the reports of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Union on progress in Central Asia. "Numbers! Numbers! Numbers! A rhapsody of numbers! A Soviet rhapsody! Every number is like a dagger. It cuts Alim to the quick."

Another happy idea was to have the leader of the counter-revolutionary *Basmachi* (kulak brigands), Ibrahim Bek, slightly wounded, brought by plane to the capital of Tadjikistan, Stalinabad. As he flew over the country "he looked upon the vast collective and state cotton fields in the fertile valley below, on the new constructions, roads, canals, Machine and Tractor Stations, and his proud head drooped. And as his plane, before landing, circled several times over the humming Tadjik capital, Ibrahim, who since his return from Afghanistan had kept 'like a goat' to the hills, gasped with irrepressible surprise." A new life had blossomed up in this mountain land near the Pamir.

Kunitz's book is aptly illustrated by numerous literal translations from local poets which give the spirit of the people. We cannot resist the temptation of quoting at least one:

> Do you hear the happy shouting, Tadjikistan?
> Your glorious day has come, Tadjikistan!
>
> Your day has come! Your day of joy has come,
> My wild, rocky, young Tadjikistan!
>
> One of a mighty family of peoples,
> Your chains are smashed, my land Tadjikistan!
>
> For centuries enslaved, now your own master,
> Your former rulers gone, Tadjikistan!
>
> To the peoples of the East your key has opened
> The doors to a new life, O great Tadjikistan!

The Central-Asian Republics are a beacon light to the enslaved colonial and semi-colonial peoples of Asia, particularly to their immediate neighbors, India and China.

MOISSAYE J. OLGIN.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Marianne Moore and Eliot

SELECTED POEMS OF MARIANNE MOORE. With an introduction by T. S. Eliot. Macmillan. $2.

IN TIMES when cultural energy is declining, poetry tends to develop the specialized audience, singularity of manner and a graduated scale of practitioners. It becomes stratified, and in the upper scales one is likely to find, though infrequently, a difficult and exasperating dexterity combined with . . . an honest heart. All this has been said before, and it could be developed *in extenso* with regard to many poets of very different origins and talents. It is most exactly the case with Marianne Moore, who has represented, from her earliest known work to her latest, the extreme frontier of this tendency, and who has impressed everybody with confidence in her sincerity.

But when a culture begins to take the descending curve—in contrast to the rise of wholly new values and conflicts which drive it aside—the speed of the fall is great; and two effects of this, in examining Miss Moore some twelve years after her ascendancy, are apparent. It is possible for the reader of ordinary poetic sensitiveness to enjoy certain portions of her work with released curiosity and an unmixed pleasure; and it is also much easier for him to understand why Miss Moore worked as she did. All this argues that the controversial period of the work has passed, and so it has. The *Selected Poems of Marianne Moore* are as definitive as a palimpsest. No longer are the old questions of technique alive. And the same is true of Mr. Eliot's introduction to the book. This delicate, considered and generous essay is almost archaic in its tone. With similar finished apothegms Eliot might have been saying the last word on Catullus.

Moreover, it seems inevitable that the collected edition of Miss Moore should have appeared with a foreword by T. S. Eliot; certainly it is a fortunate conjunction for the critic and reader. The poetry could not be weighed as well without the critic. These two show the utmost in frugal and tortured ingenuity that a starved age, a culture actually self-pivoted, can wring from real talents. And in this review I shall deal with them together.

The introduction serves better than any other work of its length by Mr. Eliot to reveal his final point of view on the criticism of his contemporaries. One may too easily call the point of view snobbish, superior, clerical or merely restricted and restricting; but it means more to say it is historical, that is, manifestly conditioned. We can agree on few rules, probably, in the criticism of poetry, but one we on the left must all accept is that poetry, when its quality is revealed, shall also be judged by the conditions that produced it. If a diamond comes from fused carbon, a pearl is found in a sick oyster. But another generalization remains to be made and this depends more insistently on the time element. We ought to be able to say generally of good art, as of any other good thing, that it should be of a nature to be desired by the largest number of people. No critic of a great age that I know of has felt his praise of poetry grow as its number of admirers diminished. Mr. Eliot says just this:

"But the *genuineness* of poetry is something which we have some warrant for believing that a small number, but only a small number, of contemporary readers can recognize."

Then as if in his eagerness to rarefy the audience even more, to whittle it down to so few that only, perhaps, Mr. Eliot himself is left, he says: "One of the tests . . . of anything new and strange seems to be its capacity for exciting aversion among 'lovers of poetry'."

Mr. Eliot says again: "Living, the poet is carrying on that struggle for the maintenance of a living language, for the maintenance of its strength, its subtlety, for the preservation of quality of feeling." And he continues, "Miss Moore is, I believe, one of those few who have done the language some service in my lifetime."

In a parenthetic note we may grant that Marianne Moore's exacting work has done something to preserve the "subtlety" and "quality" of feeling of the language, and much of her language is pure, well-chosen Anglo-Saxon. Still, in view of her search for oddity in objects, names, syntax, images, associations, literary phrases and foreign allusions, it is a little strained to speak of her as the preserver of the "living language." To many of us the living language is the language spoken by most of the living people; and we have had many American poets whose work is equally rich in well-chosen Anglo-Saxon: Frost, Millay and Robinson, for example. We concede that Miss Moore has done some service to literature by her innovations, and give her the merit of surmounting many temptations to do less.

But the real point of the quotation from Mr. Eliot is not this debatable question whether these poets are preservers of the living language. The point I come to is that Mr. Eliot places first in the scale of the poet's values his "service to language." And when the reader asks the inevitable question, "what of the service to life?" he is jolted into the belief that he is seeing through some essential hollowness and paucity in this kind of reaction to literature.

I wish to make one more reference to Mr. Eliot's text. He says of Miss Moore's poetry: "The result is often something that the majority will call frigid," and explaining this, he quotes from her work:

> The deepest feeling always shows itself in silence;
> not in silence but restraint.

"It shows itself," continues Mr. Eliot, "in a control which makes possible the fusion of the ironic-conversational and the high-rhetorical."

Now, much as these qualities are admirable in life, or in certain conditions of life, or in certain social relations within a particular framework of life, I think it entirely another thing to say that they are an admirable rule in art; in any art of wide appeal. When we speak of Oedipus, Job, Othello, Dido, so good a critic as Mr. Eliot must see how absurd such a restriction is. His idol, Dante, only has one hero, Farinata, whose "deepest feeling shows itself" in restraint. These qualities have arisen from the moral isolation of the individual in a fiercely self-protective and competitive tradition; they are not necessarily good in themselves; and applied to art they only add to the mutism, the bled-white meaning, from which all modern poetry has suffered—in the washed and stiff-dried effect, for example, of too many of Marianne Moore's poems.

I may have to apologize for tearing these quotations from such a carefully worked text as Mr. Eliot's but I do not think any real injustice has been done. The statements I have reproduced represent in every case the critic's summing up, his conclusions; and they show very clearly how he speaks for a small and thinning class. They not only reveal the minds to which he speaks, but the street, the door number, the spindly old sofa on which he sits and the faces in the drawing-room corner by the window.

Concerning Miss Moore's gifts, Eliot has some very apposite things to say. When he refers to "a mind of such agility," and a "sensibility so reticent," to the fact that with her [occasionally] "the minor subject. . . . may be the best release for the major emotions" he is just and true. His analysis of her technique is precise and well worth study.

I found, as I hinted in the beginning of this review, a certain number of poems here to be read more than once with profit, poems that start a faint but sharply agreeable vibration. Mr. Eliot overrates the warmth of these poems, what he calls the major emotions. One feels they are warm to him because he does not desire a greater warmth. They have other qualities than warmth, such as wit, sharp judgment, honesty, and a form and rhythm their own. The poems themselves have more life—I mean the flash and motion of things—than Mr. Eliot's disillusioned work, and perhaps he turns to that, in a guise which he can accept, gratefully. He also overestimates the supremacy and contemporaneity of this work as a whole. Many of the poems have lost the exciting air of youth and grown formal. The mood is dated.

What seemed to me the finest poem in the

COOKE'S STORAGE WAREHOUSE—EST. 1869
209-11 East 125 Street
PRIVATE ROOMS — $3.50 up
Comradely Treatment Assured
Telephone: HARLEM 7-1053—2235

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

book is not on a minor subject but a major one, war: the piece called *To Military Progress*. It has two poor lines, but except for them is flawless, and indicates, by its simple difference from the rest of the book, what a good mind and heart and artistic conscience like Miss Moore's may have paid for a certain conditioning:

You use your mind
Like a millstone to grind
    Chaff
You polish it
And with your warped wit
    Laugh

At your torso
Prostrate when the crow
    Falls
On such faint hearts
As its god imparts,
    Calls,

And claps its wings
Till the tumult brings
    More
Black minute-men
To revive again
    War

At little cost
They cry for the lost
    Head
And seek their prize
Till the evening sky's
    Red.

In a cycle of revolutions we find two kinds of art parallel; one can only exert a steadily narrowing influence, and produce some good poetry, regarded as the best by its few admirers. The other stream, if not yet good, commands a steadily widening influence and the best of it seeks and secures the widest. The peculiarity of a revolutionary cycle is that the choice of the artist between these two never depends upon merely his taste in literature, but upon his place in life, the degree to which he feels himself reacting to life, and the functioning of his entire self, which can then take in more poetical experience than merely doing "the language some service."

ORRICK JOHNS.

Nazi Work of Art

CONDEMNED TO LIVE, by Johann Rabener. Translated from the German by Geoffrey Dunlop. Doubleday, Doran. $3.

A FEW months ago the author of this novel celebrated his twenty-fifth birthday. It must have been a very pleasant occasion. His book was an astonishing success. It had been praised by Thomas Mann, the distinguished exile and anti-Nazi, and also (and quite as enthusiastically) by the leading Nazi critics. Thus the encouragement which had once been given him by Jacob Wassermann, a Jew, had been amply justified. One would have to be a little more or a little less than human not to be flattered by such an extraordinary united front of applause.

Rabener is important to us for two reasons: firstly because his is the one belletristic reputation that has been made in Germany under the National Socialist government and we are obviously interested in any "work of art" generated by a fascist society; and secondly because he crystallizes in his art the mind, temper and outlook of the middle-class youth of the Third Reich—the youth that made Hitler possible.

Rabener was born in Breslau. He was a raw youngster when he got his first job, an apprenticeship in a silk factory. He worked subsequently in a bank in Amsterdam, a grain firm in Frankfurt, a flax firm in Ghent; a newspaper office in Berlin, an export business somewhere else. That represents a great deal of experience for an adolescent. He saw the inside of numerous enterprises of various kinds—enough to give him an insight into the economic nature of his society and to provide him with at least an elementary understanding of different social classes. The period was one of undisguised capitalist collapse. Reputable banks and factories were closing daily—and it so happens that every company for which Rabener worked ultimately closed down. We become a little uneasy when we learn that even today he sees nothing in that fact but an amusing coincidence, especially since his novel deals entirely with the beginnings of that period.

It is 1924. Berlin is suffering the agonies of inflation. The starved and beaten proletariat is ideologically disorganized by the combination of external circumstance and the policies of its official leaders. The middle classes are demoralized. It is the time of disillusionment and degeneracy—of bestiality, perversion, crime, suicide—social class reflected in the conduct of the classes who nominally held the power of the state. Is it necessary to describe it further? It has been made familiar to us. It was a corrupt society exposing its corruption in a mood of violent self-pity.

The chief characters of the story are several typical youths of that time—men of twenty and twenty-two with decayed bourgeois backgrounds, wandering painfully along the tortuous mazes of their ruined world in a hopeless effort to adjust themselves to it. They are all alike, yet not identical, and through their differences we are enabled to get a complete picture of the scene. No depth is left unplumbed: every horror, every crime, every vice is paraded before our eyes —and each leads to one end: defeat, frustration.

The story is told in a style deliberately and rather self-consciously Dostoevskyan. This note is particularly dominant in the life devised by the author for his major protagonist— a boy called Fedor. Fedor's tragedy—aside from his poverty and his failure as an artist—lies in his emotional and pecuniary dependence upon his mother. She is portrayed as a bitch-devil, a grotesque symbol of the whole period. Lecherous, greedy, cruel, she draws her son into an incestuous relationship with her—a relationship carefully and vividly described by the author—and after a few months flings him aside and brings a pimp into the house to gratify her abnormal lust. Fedor must now not only accept his mother's money but must watch quiescently while the body of the woman he loved, both as a mother and a mistress, is the sport of a stranger.

Thus are the lurid horrors piled upon each other, until the reader is nauseated, then annoyed and finally indifferent—and at this point Rabener resolves the situation by having Fedor kill his mother and end his own life by lying down upon a railroad track embracing the Jewish girl with whom he has been living. Finis.

If it is difficult to deduce the author's intention from this outline, let me assure you that it is even more difficult to do so from the 500-page book itself. One thing, however, is clear. Rabener has attempted, apparently among other things, to defend his generation. We are to conclude that whatever the young men of Germany are, it is not their fault, but the fault of the world into which they were born. Just why this generation is entitled to our sympathy is a little less clear. Granted that their environment was vicious and crippling, there is no evidence in Rabener's book that they ever struggled against it or conceived the possibility of remarking it. Indeed, in the light of Rabener's own portraiture these youths seem to me to be singularly unpleasant. They are concerned wholly with the satisfaction of their personal desires. They are egotistic, weak, ungenerous. I can discern no true idealism among them, no trace of courage—but only desperation. I certainly cannot see any intelligence: they seem baffled and befogged as they stare at the convulsions of their dying society. Out of such material it is impossible to create tragedy; it is still sound dramaturgy to invest your characters with heroic qualities if you want the audience to consider their doom tragic. No doubt Rabener wanted to do so, perhaps he even tried, but he has enough of the instinct of an artist to find it difficult to lie, even about puppets.

It is worth remembering that there *were* some heroes in Germany in 1924. Think, for example, of the men and women who carried on the traditions of the proletarian revolution—the labor of building a party, of awakening the masses, against incredible odds, against repressions and betrayals. Who were they? Workers and intellectuals—toilers united with the best elements of the bourgeoisie. They do not enter Rabener's book. . . . But let us forget heroism; let us remember simply that there were many—there were thousands—who saw plainly what ailed Germany in those days. It was no secret. Analyses of the social and economic ailments of the German state were almost too common. And with that as a background

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

we can judge better the author and the youngsters who inhabit this novel—a novel, mind you, that has been loudly acclaimed in Germany, in England, in America, as a significant achievement and the herald of a new genius.

Rabener is presumably dealing with fundamentals; it was his intention to picture an entire community, to dissect its constituents, to expose its reality. Yet there is no hint of understanding on his part of the tensions that were determining Germany's destiny, or of the groups that were bleeding it so ruthlessly throughout the 1920's. On the contrary. The stock exchange, which rightfully plays an important part in the story—for it was the exchange that actually ruled the nation then—is to him merely a somewhat mad nesting-place for irresponsible gamblers. And what is even more significant—the gamblers of the exchange are principally Jews. All the other Jews in the story (are we to take it that that means *all* Jews?) are either Communists or ghetto characters. The one exception is Fedor's girl—the very spiritual, very naive, very lovely and very stupid creature who dies with him under the train. The symbolism of that piece of business is murky, but interesting to reflect upon.

Further, the author is frankly contemptuous of purposeful social idealism. A young Communist is portrayed as a loud-mouthed ass mechanically repeating trite political slogans with or without provocation (and generally without), whereas a religious mystic uttering vague sentiments of goodness is portrayed sympathetically. Beyond that I can perceive neither natural nor historic forces operating in the lives of these melancholy characters. I get no feeling of order, of causality, of reason, of ends. There is no special significance given to any incident or personality. The symbolism implied in Fedor's murder of his mother is obvious—but what comes after that? What does it accomplish? Is mere violence—mere destruction—sufficient to cleanse the world? Will the death of the corrupter remove corruption? The vision is obscured; one feels the author's resentment, but that is not the equivalent of insight.

Condemned to Live is the only substantial work of prose fiction so far produced in Nazi Germany. Make no mistake about it: it is not without quality. There is a kind of brutal power in it, a hypnotic morbidity, an enticing preoccupation with the dark and evil facets of human life. But there is also in it a kind of childishness, naiveté leading to anti-intellectualism and ending in a demonic search for salvation in the jungle. It is, in short, a mirror of the young Nazi mind—not the mind of Thyssens, but of the youth who joyfully raises his hand when Goering walks down the avenue. We cannot weep for Rabener's people. The rotting bourgeoisie spawned them; they have their moment of "glory" now; they will pass. We can salute the author only for his honesty, and we can predict that his future as an artist will be decided by the extent of the willingness to learn what lies underneath the mutations of history. A derived style is inadequate; Dostoevsky was something else. He was not what is apparently the best that fascism can give us: near-sighted introspection. If Rabener stays at that level, he will end in the arms of Horst Wessel, if he is not already there.

In the meantime—while we await further indications of Rabener's true stature—we can begin to define the nature of fascist literature. We note first that the mind has no function in the physiology of this new species of art. Thought is a despised quality, and the uncontrolled, animal emotions of the subconscious are the sole springs of action. Secondly, action is almost synonymous with violence. The little deeds, the day-to-day movements, the internal conflicts which manifest themselves in indecisive and hesitant steps forward and backward in accordance with the flow of circumstance—all those things which make up the life of a man in a civilized society and which have rich meanings for the psychologist, are now too trivial for the eye of the artist, and nothing but a sequence of explosions is capable of riveting the attention. Thirdly, such qualities as modesty and humility, or a sense of the proportion between the individual and the world, are lost, and in their place are theatricality and giantism. As for such peculiarities as the division of women into the two simple categories of whores and saints, or as the emphasis upon flagellation as a means to the light, there is nothing that need be said here. Pause to weigh the fate of German literature, of which the great achievement from Goethe to Mann was the philosophical novel, and then go on to speculate upon whether or not art expresses the society from which it comes.

BERNARD SMITH.

Brief Review

CHRONICLES OF BARABBAS, 1884-1934, by George H. Doran. (Harcourt Brace. $3.50.) A flood of trivial gossip about celebrities contacted by Mr. Doran in fifty years of indiscriminate publishing. Mr. Doran is proud of having printed anti-German rubbish in the Great War, considers Mary Roberts Rinehart a great writer and sees in Hearst "a magnificence of patriotism and a far-seeing vision."

THE FRUSTRATION OF SCIENCE. Foreword by Frederick Soddy. (W. W. Norton & Co. $2.) A symposium on the condition of science under contemporary capitalism. The conclusions are indicated in the title, and two of the contributors, Sir Daniel Hall, who writes on agriculture, and Professor P. M. S. Blackett, bluntly declare that the only hope for science is in a collective socialist society.

THE PRICE OF PEACE, by Frank H. Simonds and B. Emery. (Harper and Bros. $3.) The World War, say the authors, left the great powers divided into the satisfied states; France, England, the Soviet Union and the United States; and the unsatisfied states, lacking either in the achievement of ethnic unity, geographical security or economic resources: Germany, Italy and Japan. Mr. Simonds thus realizes the immediacy of the war and peace problem; his criticism remains inside capitalist terms and can therefore arrive at no conclusion other than the wish-fulfillment that somehow, sometimes, the unsatisfied states be satisfied without war, or else . . . ?

RESTLESS DAYS, by Lilo Linke. A German Girl's Autobiography. (Alfred A. Knopf. $3.) The atmosphere of a petty-bourgeois German family between 1914-1933 is very feelingly presented by Lilo Linke, who broke from such a family but traveled the road of departure only half way. Clever and ambitious, she had some political successes, got as far as Social Democracy, but never understood or recognized the class struggle, a lack which goes over into her book which ends in unresolved question marks.

PEACE AND THE PLAIN MAN, by Norman Angell. (Harper and Bros. $2.50.) Mr. Angell writes: "In the last analysis war is brought about not by governments nor capitalist nor armament manufacturers but by men . . . the masses who . . . insist on policies of defense." Thus doth the sweetly reasonable pacifist frame up the masses as those responsible for war. Norman Angell's new book is a quite complete *reductio ad absurdum* of the liberal position on war and peace.

LOUIS ADAMIC AND SHADOW AMERICA, by Carey McWilliams. (Arthur Whipple Press. $1.50.) One intention of the book is to vindicate Adamic from the charge of viewing the labor problem from a petty-bourgeois attitude, yet its chief effect is to substantiate the charge. Adamic himself has written "one cannot afford to plunge too far into economic and social issues of American life. One is left to be . . . overwhelmed and crushed."

THE LITTLE WIFE AND OTHER STORIES, by William March. (Smith and Haas. $2.) In those stories in which he shows Sherwood Anderson's influence March falls below his own standard. It is a high standard and shows a strong feeling for the realities of contemporary life, contact with something bigger than what has until now been the chief theme of fiction, the troubled individual. Outstanding in the book is the story of the old worker, "He Sits There All Day Long," A book well worth reading.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Theatre

"The Young Go First"

HAVING left behind them, temporarily, the short agit-prop play, The Theatre of Action presents its first full length production with all the verve and color which has long been associated with its work. *The Young Go First,* a kind of American *Sailors of Cattaro,* can rightfully take an honorable place in the ever-growing repertory of revolutionary plays.[1]

The play tells a straightforward story of a crowd of unemployed New York youths who, out of the desire of their own hearts and by the persuasive words of the government, are captivated with the idea of the Civilian Conservation Camps; country-life, work, an idyllic solution to their problems. From one disappointment to another, from one provocation and brutal disciplinary action to another, the awareness of what really constitutes the C. C. C. grows apace in their minds. And alongside the disillusion emerge the first faltering steps of resistance until finally the unity and militant action of the C. C. C. workers, Irish, Italian, Jew and gentile, gain a noteworthy victory. This unity is dramatized in an original way. It is something fresh in the revolutionary theatre and I am not going to reveal it to you. Any critic who gives it away ought to be put on your preferred list—of those to be boycotted.

The authors, one of whom lived and worked in the C. C. C. for about a year, succeed in bringing on to the stage as true and as genuine a collection of human beings as I have ever seen on the stage. There is Beebie Menucci, a tough Italian lad from East 103 Street played with ecstatic violence by Will Lee; there is Jeff Patten, one of those born leaders, ably done by Edward Mann; there is Lempi Sawicki, a sex-driven kid, played by Harry J. Lessin with all the horror and hunger of this kind of poverty as well as the economic kind. In my opinion, Lessin's performance ranks with Luther Adler's in *Awake and Sing!* as one of the best of the year. There are other outstanding jobs; Curtis Conwaye's Edmund Burke O'Leary ("The Harps started it in Queensland and will finish it here") is a fine portrait of an Irish Tenth Avenue kid, David Kerman, Ben Ross and others too numerous to mention here. In short, the whole company as well as the whole production is as professional as any you'll see in town.

Alfred Saxe and Elia Kazan directed the play understandingly, giving it a high sense of reality. They have succeeded in contributing much detail and keeping it flowing from one beat to another. Only in the first scene is there any cause to cavil. Its simultaneous action is confusing. Without focus it is difficult to catch. But I saw the play in a preview and I am sure that when it opens the scene will be integrated and tightened.

Having seen the preview, it is impossible to discuss the full merits of the final script. What it lacks to make clearer the tie-up of the C. C. C. with war preparation and the effect of this unholy combine on the boys, and where it fails to deepen and broaden the militance of the rebels beyond the immediate borders of the C. C. C., will, I hope, be in the script by the time the play finally comes into view. However, there is no question in my mind that *The Young Go First* is a revolutionary play, fast moving, full of suspense and with a wallop that goes straight to the chin. There can't be a doubt in the audience's mind that here is a true picture of C. C. C. life down to the last detail.

The Theatre of Action, the authors, directors and company of *The Young Go First* have a right to be proud, and New York audiences, worker and white-collar, cannot fail to enjoy and thrill to this new play.

MICHAEL BLANKFORT.

[1] *The Young Go First,* by Peter Martin, George Scudder, and Charles Friedman. Produced by The Theatre of Action (Formerly the Workers' Laboratory Theatre.) Park Theatre. Admission: 55c to $1.

Sklar's and Peter's "Parade"

THE morning after its New York premiere (May 20, Guild Theatre), *Parade* woke to find itself buried under a wet blanket—which on closer examination proved a crazy-quilt composed of patches from The Times, Post, Herald-Tribune and American, suspiciously alike in color and shape and all painstakingly embroidered with the same slogan: *Thumbs down!* But the same night *Parade* played to a packed house. For a left revue is in itself an event and when written by the authors of *Stevedore* it is an occasion. A welcome occasion, in our opinion, because it is for the most part one of the most palatable of current entertainments—and what is more, a revue that is actually intelligent.

This by no means implies that *Parade* is the revolutionary revue we have all been waiting for: one that subjects the Roosevelt era to scorching wit, withering caricature and sizzling invective. Such a revue, of course, can be produced only by a working-class theatre. And few would be naive enough to expect the Theatre Guild to undertake it, or for that matter to produce the manuscript of *Parade* as originally written by Paul Peters and George Sklar. For some allegedly practical reason, Broadway has a special ruling about revues which gives the producer and not the authors the final say on material. What happened to *Parade* in the vigilant hands of Lee Simonson and associates remains a mystery to all but Peters and Sklar; but from the fate of Jerome's "Newsboy" and Kreymborg's "America, America" we know that the producers did a great deal of blood-letting. Nevertheless, in its present version *Parade* is a rather abrasive experience to the run of Guild subscribers—which means that NEW MASSES readers can buy their tickets with the certainty of having a good time.

There is Jimmy Savo, for instance, an amazing artist whom *Parade* keeps busy most of the evening. His is gorgeous comedy: exquisite or hilarious, ingenious or pathetic. As the Capri-bound Huey Long, the appendicitis-stricken applicant to a free clinic, the mute starveling who trails hot-dog and chestnut stands, or the pantomime Puffle-manufacturer who tries to run his own factory, he alternately tickles the brain and sets the diaphragm rocking. As the dogmatically liberal reader of The Nation, however, he fails to give an adequate performance. As it was, four second-night customers moored in the eighth row bounced out of the theatre in wounded indignation even before Savo had pronounced all the words of Emanuel Eisenberg's "My Feet Are Firmly Planted on the Ground." . . .

> I'm right in life's deep thickets.
> When cops go clubbing pickets,
> I call on Oswald Garrison Villard.
> We never just ignore things;
> We write that we DEPLORE things
> And hope that neither side was hurt too hard. . . .

There is a pungent song about "Selling Sex" (by Kyle Crichton) and a lyric on "Peace, the International Orphan," both brightly sung by Evelyn Dall. But perhaps the shrewdest is Marc Blitzstein's recitativo of the banker's wife who takes up socialism in the verses and in the choruses sends for the militia. There are copious commentaries on the A.A.A., Hearstian Americanism, etc., and a destructive sketch about "Madame Tchichornia," author of *Flight from the Soviet,* who illustrates her tale of Bolshevik atrocities with a rare series of lantern slides.

One of *Parade's* important contributions is in its negative aspects. By the dilute pas-

THE THEATRE OF ACTION (Formerly Workers Laboratory Theatre) presents
"A revolutionary play—fast-moving, full of suspense and has a wallop that goes straight to the chin."—M. Blankfort, New Masses.
PARK THEATRE
ON COLUMBUS CIRCLE
Prices: All Performances 25c to $1.10
Eves. 8:45—Mat. Sat. 2:45
Call R. Rammelkamp CIr 7-0490 for reduced rates for Benefit Theatre Parties
THE YOUNG GO FIRST
A drama of the CCC camps

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cates what a working-class theatre will avoid when it undertakes our first uncompromisingly revolutionary revue. *Parade* is composed of a series of numbers whose lack of specific relation deprives the whole of its total force. Not only could this loss have been prevented but the impact of the whole would have been enormously strengthened by the presence of a unifying theme. Nor has *Parade* any number which by itself deals a stunning blow. This situation has not been remedied but aggravated by theatrical overproduction—elaborations of thin material ("Marry the Family"); blurring of the clear hard political satire by insensitive direction; the dance numbers which are lengthy, serious and lavishly insipid; and the parade of mill and office-workers sung to the conventional revue music and staged in the conventional revue manner. These are weaknesses inherent in the bourgeois-revue form. Its walls will be burst under the pressure of explosive revolutionary content which in the hands of capable artists—and there are plenty of them around—will evolve a form of its own.

Such a revue is yet to be announced (let it not take too long!) Meanwhile there is *Parade,* which not only suggests what our working-class revue can be but is well worth seeing for itself. Go if you can (there are some seats at $1.10). And if you know anyone who doubts that humor has a class basis, take him along and read to him from the bourgeois reviewers. He will understand why The Times, Post, Herald-Tribune and American were not amused.

STANLEY BURNSHAW.

The Negro Peoples Theatre

THE Friends of Harlem, a united front organization to develop cultural activities in Harlem, has organized The Negro Peoples' Theatre: a permanent company of some twenty members drawn chiefly from the players of *Green Pastures* and *Stevedore,* under the direction of Rose McClendon and Chick McKinney. This theatre will deal chiefly with material of social realism and protest. Through the years of slavery and social segregation the Negro has built up a culture rich in dramatic material, which in the main has been untouched. But almost without exception the Negro has been presented according to the philosophy of the box-office, a conception mangled and distorted by the dictates of chauvinism and commercial success.

The Negro Peoples' Theatre marks the first effort at establishing a Harlem community theatre in the true sense of the word. When news of this undertaking was first broadcast, it was received with skepticism. It was said that Harlem would never support a theatre of any kind—a reaction based on the type of theatre that has existed in the past. But drama identified with the genuine interests of the people elicits response quickly enough, a fact abundantly demonstrated by the hundreds who traveled downtown from Harlem to see *Stevedore.*

The Negro Peoples' Theatre gives its opening production on Saturday, June 1, at Rockland Palace, in Clifford Odets' *Waiting for Lefty.* Immediately thereafter the company will rehearse a full-length play about workers in the Southern oil fields. A theatre, yet to be selected, will permanently house the company.

BRILLIANT
HARLEM NIGHT AND FESTIVAL
The Negro People's Theatre Offers
The Original Negro Casts of
"Green Pastures" in
"WAITING FOR LEFTY"
ROCKLAND PALACE
155th Street & 8th Avenue
SATURDAY
JUNE 1st
8:30 P. M.
Dance Presentation:
Jane Dudley Ad Bates Miriam Blecher
Lansky Anne Sokolow
Dancing:
TEDDY HILL
And His Roseland Dance Orchestra
Tickets: Fifty Cents
Workers Bookshop, 50 East 13th Street
New Masses, 31 East 27th Street
New Theatre League, 114 West 14th Street
AUSPICES: FRIENDS OF HARLEM

FRIDAY
MAY
31
8:00 p. m.
●
Admission
25c

FASCIST & KLAN TERROR IN THE SOUTH
Speakers: Robert Wood, Ann Burlak, Angelo Herndon, Pat Toohey, Clifford Odets
ALLAN TAUB, Chairman
at IRVING PLAZA
Irving Place & 15th St., N. Y. C.
Auspices: National Committee for Defense of Political Prisoners; Committee to Support Southern Textile Organization; Southern District, International Labor Defense

See
THE YOUNG GO FIRST
at the
New Masses Benefit
FRIDAY—MAY 31st
●
Make reservations by telephoning
CAledonia 5-3076

The THEATRE GUILD *presents*
"PARADE" *A Social Review with* **JIMMY SAVO**
GUILD THEATRE, 52 St., West of Broadway. COl. 5-8229
●
Evenings: 8:30—$1.10, $1.65, $2.20, $2.75, $3.30.
Thursday Matinee: 2:30—$1.10, $1.65, $2.20.
Saturday Matinee: 2:30—$1.10, $1.65, $2.20, 2.75

TYPEWRITERS
Yiddish and Russian
TYPEWRITERS
206 Broadway NEW YORK CITY
TYTELL TYPEWRITER CO.
Tel. CO 7-9605

The Group Theatre Presents
"AWAKE AND SING!"
By CLIFFORD ODETS
Eves. $2.75-$1.10. Mats. $2.20-55c
BELASCO THEA., 44th St., E. of Broadway. Evegs. 8:45. Mats. Thurs. & Sat.
"WAITING FOR LEFTY" and **"TILL THE DAY I DIE"**
2 plays by CLIFFORD ODETS
Eves. $1.65-40c. Mats. $1.10-40c
LONGACRE Thea., 48th St., W. of Broadway. Eves. 8:30. Mats. Wed. & Sat.
For Theatre Party Benefits—call HELEN THOMPSON, PEnn. 6-7234
or write THE GROUP THEATRE, 246 West 44th Street, New York City

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Reviewing the Press

WHEN President Roosevelt announced his executive order, on Monday, May 20, for established wage rates of $19 to $94 a month on the $4,800,000,000 work relief program, the subject seemed meat for editorial approval or indignation in the daily press. It is symptomatic of the progressive degeneration of N.R.A. that this "relief" measure, which might once have been hailed with hysterical gratitude by almost everybody (except possibly, The New York Herald Tribune) as a beautiful Step Toward Recovery, was submitted to criticism of infinite range. You can count, however, on the unfailing fact that the entire press—including the noisily crusading Post—took very good care to overlook completely the real issues involved.

In The World-Telegram, a leading editorial appeared on Tuesday, the same day the news was printed. "This Is Not Relief" said the title, and some of us were undone to think they might mean it. But disabuse came soon.

> Wage rates under the four billion dollar work relief program as fixed by the President's executive order last night, are disappointing. . . . A family in the $19 a month class must be supported on $228 a year—even if the family head receives steady work for the entire year which is highly improbable. A family cannot be supported anywhere in America on $228 a year, which is less than 63 cents a day. Unfortunately, it is not possible to provide the $2,500 a year which government experts estimate is required to assure a "moderately full life" for the typical American family. But certainly *no less than one-seventh* of this budget or $1 a day income should be the absolute minimum. Even that $365 a year would mean privation, hunger, malnutrition for adults and children. When the figure is reduced to $228 or less a year, as in the executive order, we fall far below the danger point of public health, public morals and public order. . . . *With the general theory of the executive order . . . there should be no dissent.* Likewise, the principle of keeping most of the work relief scales below prevailing private rates is necessary to prevent large permanent work relief rolls and to encourage private reëmployment. The scale for highly-trained and educated professional and technical workers, which ranges from $94 a month to as low as $39, is nothing for them to cheer about. *It may be justified, however, by the emergency and the fact that this is only relief.* But $19 a month, or 63 cents a day, for support of a family is not relief. It is slow starvation. In our judgment it cannot be justified. [Italics mine.]

The World-Telegram, then, comes out boldly against $19 a month as a living wage. Workers of the world, listen to your audacious champion. As for the remainder of the wages, it may not be good, but is it so bad? In any and all cases, The World-Telegram says, let us not contest the wisdom and good intentions of Franklin D.—particularly since we have periodically broken out in front-page jeremiads, howling down the pack of diseased malcontents who presume to denigrate Our President.

All the other New York papers waited until the following day before they had digested the announcement and felt ready to record mature reflections—all, that is, except The American and The Journal. Hearst, labor-lover, ran true to form in not considering the scheme even worthy of comment. The American's editorials included a criticism of Morgenthau's radio speech on monetary policy and an acid plea to the government to "Foster Aviation!" The Journal naturally wrote on "Pay the Bonus!" and acknowledged the wage-rate plan only by including it in a T. E. Powers cartoon. On one side of this inspired drawing two professors stood on a mountain of money-bags which they were handing out to leering politicians; on the other a noble figure labeled "Congress" gave a bag marked "Bonus" to a man called "Veteran." In its own quiet way The Journal had made it clear that the wage program was their idea of just another racket by the Brain Trust of the New Deal. The astuteness of this is a little alarming.

It was The Mirror which led off with exemplary candor by titling its editorial "Better Than Nothing." After pointing out that it was the President's duty to make the allotted money reach as many people as possible, the paper said:

> Concerning the suggested "strikes among the unemployed," it is difficult to see against whom or what the UNEMPLOYED could strike To strike aginst the Government is not easy, and it is hoped that the spending of almost five billions of dollars in a short time, even on a moderate basis of payment, will create spending, stimulate industry and create "natural" jobs. . . . The United States Government is trying the greatest "paternalism" experiment in history and the welfare of all demands that this experiment be made sucessful if possible. Mr. Green, head of the American Federation of Labor, would be the last to desire any other result, although representing Union labor and the great acomplishments for high wages in the past, he probably feels bound to oppose anything that seems like official recognition of a low wage scale.

In its cynical crack at the hollow barking of William Green and in its none too subtle intimation that this experiment had better be successful *or else,* The Mirror makes admirably clear the stand of paternalistic fascism it will be ready to take at the proper moment.

The News was equally candid but unhappily betrayed the cold neutrality of its title "Low Wages for Relief Workers," by permitting itself a series of loud machine-gun rattles to see if its eventual aim would be good. Commenting on the grievances of labor leaders and Green's reported fear of violence and strikes, it said:

> . . . it may be a harsh thing to say, but we have police and militia and soldiers to take care of violence; and we'll have to use them if relief workers get *too* fresh in considerable numbers. Which they probably won't.

"Get fresh" seems a really tasteful way of putting it. For what would it amount to but contemptible ingratitude?

The Times grew unconsciously sardonic when it maintained that:

> The wage scale he has now announced is entirely reasonable when considered in relation to the plan itself and entirely consistent with the program as he has described it from the start.

Its further points were the fantastic ones everybody else made: What better could you do with a fixed sum like four billion eight hundred million dollars? and how else than with low wages could you discourage people from seeking permanent government aid instead of returning to private employment "after the emergency"?

It took the classic loathing of The Herald Tribune for N.R.A. to dismiss the plan as a profound absurdity and then to indulge in a priceless idiocy of its own.

> The more closely the President's executive order establishing monthly wages for relief workers is examined, the clearer it becomes that it is another example of New Deal obscuration. . . . Others have insisted that it (the "prevailing wage" rate theory) was essential to make the wages for relief work sufficiently less than the prevailing rate to discourage men from leaving their present jobs to go on relief. Under the prevailing system a man who goes on relief is assured of a minimum income. He knows that the higher-ups are working hard to enable him to live in increasing comfort regardless of whether or not he works. The government is thus paving the way for a large number of permanent wards. It will be hard enough to force these off for low pay allowances.

This paper is at least extraordinarily direct in informing you that it considers the government an isolated agency quite unassociated with the body of people governed, which must absolutely not saddle itself with charges that are private industry's concern.

The Sun, one of the very few who made a fair point, nevertheless couldn't think of anything much to do about it.

> The Administration attacked the prevailing wage amendment on the ground that it would sharply limit the number who could benefit by the four billions available and that it would make it impossible to help more than a minority of the jobless. In attempting to regulate the flow of funds from the four-billion-dollar pool, however, the Administration has come up against the dilemma suggested by those critics of the work relief plan who argued that four billion dollars was either entirely too much or altogether too little.

At last a sane suggestion!—that the four billion dollars made available might be too preposterously and outrageously small for an appreciable program of work projects.

But the high point of eloquent indignation came from the spuriously militant Post in a front-page editorial, "Degrading Wages."

> The new relief wage scales are a national disgrace. . . . The Post throws up its hands before these grotesque figures. Administration liberalism seems to have suffered a sickly change in its translation from platform generalities to specific pay schedules. The new pay scales are as dangerous as they are disgraceful. The President is creating a class of economic untouchables, a caste

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> new to America. He is isolating 10,000,000 American unemployed and their families from normal business intercourse with the rest of the country, shunting them outside the circle of decent pay and decent living. . . . Return the unemployed to America, to the America of decent homes, decent wages, decent living. To keep them outside the circle is to develop in America a discontented multitude of society's stepchildren, fertile soil for the radicalism that low-wage-paying business leaders profess to fear.

Has The Post campaigned at any time for larger appropriation on relief projects? In limiting its grievance to the humiliating and debilitating effects of low wage distribution, it accomplishes nothing but a babbling humanitarianism . . . *and* a leering climactic warning that the result of all this may be radicalism and Communism, horrors and menaces which are beyond all the monstrosities of enforced sweated labor.

No amount of reading and rereading of the editorial pages of New York's capitalist dailies could have given you the full intimations of Roosevelt's wage scale on work relief. The fascist threat behind the full supervisory power accorded to Harry L. Hopkins, administrator, who may drop people and raise and lower their pay; the loyalty to private industry in making official government pay so low that individual organizations can gradually follow suit; the use of the militia and the whole official machinery of suppression and strike-breaking in case of discontent and strikes by relief employes; the gigantic blow to trade unionism and its victories of fixed scales; the deliberate disintegration of all strength and solidarity in all labor cooperation:—these conclusions you would somehow have had to invent for yourself out of the vicious morass of tsck-tscking, moralizing and what-can-you-do.

MARGARET WRIGHT MATHER.

Between Ourselves

THE appearance of Joshua Kunitz's new book, *Dawn Over Samarkand,* will be marked on the evening of June 14 with a meeting held by THE NEW MASSES at Webster Hall, 119 East 11th Street, New York, at which Earl Browder and Angelo Herndon will speak, in addition to the author. The Covici-Friede edition of *Dawn Over Samarkand* book is dedicated to Herndon, and a specially bound copy of the book will be presented to him by Kunitz. Webster Hall, with all seats taken, holds only about 1,000 so tickets should be obtained early. They may be had at THE NEW MASSES office, 31 East 27th Street, or at the Workers' Bookshop, 50 East 13th St. (Tickets 35c.)

The prize contest for a proletarian novel, conducted jointly by THE NEW MASSES and The John Day Company, publishers, ends June 1. No manuscripts postmarked after that date can be considered. Announcement of the result of the contest will be made in THE NEW MASSES as soon as the judges conclude their task.

Margaret Wright Mather, who contributes this week the first of a series of reviews of the press, has been absent from the magazine's pages for a considerable time. Following her intensive study of millionaires she had a period of ill-health; at present she is taking a course in journalism at Columbia.

New Masses Lectures

Friday, May 31—Michael Gold will speak on "Revolutionary Literature in the U. S. A." 8:30 P. M. at 2074 West 27th Street, Coney Island. Auspices: Coney Island Workers' Club.

Speakers can be obtained without cost to organizations. Subscription plan may be obtained by writing to NEW MASSES Lecture Bureau.

HEAR! HEAR!
JOHANNES STEEL
Foreign Editor, New York Post
WHITE TERROR IN ROUMANIA
Fri. Eve.—MAY 31—at 8 P. M.
IRVING PLAZA
15th Street & Irving Place
Admission: Twenty-five Cents
Auspices: Comm. for Aid of Victims of Terror in Roumania

press league
INVITES YOU TO HEAR
BEN DAVIS
Editor, Negro Liberator
Talk on HARLEM
Monday, June 3, at 8:15 P. M.
210 FIFTH AVE., ROOM 502
25c ADMISSION

SKIN, URINARY AND BLOOD
Men and Women
Dr. S. A. Chernoff
Hours: 10-8 P. M. Sun.: 11-2 P. M.
X-RAY and FLUOROSCOPE
223 Second Avenue New York City
Corner 14th Street TOmpkins Square 6-7697

Visit SOVIET RUSSIA TOURS 33 TO 60 DAYS $202.75 UP 3rd Class
For unforgettable impressions, join one of our Summer tours, conducted or independent.
Select Your Own Route or Any Below:
1. London, Leningrad, Moscow and other Soviet Cities. Warsaw, Vienna, Zurich and Paris.
2. London, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Helsingfors, Leningrad, Moscow and other Soviet Cities. Warsaw, Vienna, Zurich and Paris.
3. Maderia, Gibraltar, Malaga, Monte Carlo, Genoa, Venice, Naples, Rome, Beyruth, Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv, Istanbul, Odessa and other Soviet Cities. Warsaw, Vienna, Zurich and Paris.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR TEACHERS
Write for booklet describing these and other trips.
FOR PHYSICIANS Medical Health Resort Tour To U. S. S. R.—and Physiological Congress June 29 to Sept. 2nd *Sailing on S.S. Roma* The group will be conducted by Dr. Edward Cohen, an official of our bank, who has made 6 trips to the Soviet Union.
SIX WEEKS IN MOSCOW UNIVERSITY—$176.00 INCL. MAINTENANCE
AMALGAMATED BANK OF N. Y. 11-15 Union Sq. New York City

The Outstanding Russian Tour of 1935
Second
Soviet Union Travel Seminar
under leadership of
LOUIS FISCHER
Moscow correspondent of *The Nation* who has spent 12 years in Soviet Russia.
For a few serious students . . . 5 weeks of travel and observation in the Soviet Union, illuminated by informal meetings with leaders and rank and file workers. An unusually comprehensive survey of activities in city and country including Armenia and other digressions from the beaten path. High standards of comfort. Sailing June 19 on the United States Lines S.S. MANHATTAN; returning to New York August 22.
ROUND TRIP WITH TOURIST PASSAGE $890
One of a Dozen Trips from $369 (Third Class) Up
Booklet on Request

The OPEN ROAD
8 WEST 40th STREET (Soviet Travel Department) NEW YORK, N. Y.
COOPERATING WITH INTOURIST

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

INTERNATIONAL

Housing in the Sky

THE HOUSING QUESTION

by FREDERICK ENGELS

explains the reasons in a classic analysis which develops into a trenchant criticism of the existing order and investigates the coercive essence of capitalist state power.

Hence a study of paramount importance in this epoch.

Clothbound, $0.75

Write for our new catalogue to

INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHERS

381 Fourth Avenue New York, N. Y.

CAMP NITGEDAIGET

ON THE HUDSON **BEACON, N. Y.**

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

— COTTAGES for TWO and FOUR —
— Tennis — Handball — Swimming —
Five-Piece Orchestra Pierre Degeyter Trio
Dancing Concert

$14.00 PER WEEK

Cars leave daily 10:30 A. M. from:
2700 Bronx Park East, Bronx, N. Y.
(Round Trip: $2.00)
New York Central Trains to Beacon, N. Y.
Tel: Beacon 731. City Office: EStabrook 8-1400

ADIRONDACK JUNE

At a most modern and complete adult camp

- Intimate
- Colorful
- Alive

Private golf course
Low June Rates

Booklet on request

NEW YORK OFFICE
157 West 57th Street
COlumbus 5-6346
Lena BARISH Sam GARLEN
DIRECTORS

GREEN MANSIONS

WARRENSBURG, N. Y.

SUMMER TOUR EXTRAORDINARY

to the

U.S.S.R.

54 most interesting days

$429.

Conducted by

LOUIS LOZOWICK

Louis Lozowick, artist, lecturer, critic, has visited the Soviet Union several times beginning with 1922, has travelled extensively and has met intimately with Soviet scholars, workers, artists, writers, men of the theatre, critics.

• • •

Sailing July 5 on S. S. CHAMPLAIN

Other tours as low as

$202.75

World Tourists, Inc.
175 Fifth Avenue, New York City
Telephone: ALgonquin 4-6656-7-8

JADE MOUNTAIN

Chinese Restaurant

Lunch 35c — special — Dinner 55c
WELCOME TO OUR COMRADES
197 SECOND AVE., NEW YORK CITY

CLASSIFIED ADS

30c a line

6 words in a line. **3 lines minimum**

SUMMER RESORTS

A DELIGHTFUL HIDE-AWAY in the mountains inviting people of better taste. Wholesome food, delightful companionship, outdoor sports.

Bring your skates along for the Decoration Day week-end. Lovely new roller skating rink just completed.

CHESTERS' ZUNBARG
Woodbourne, N. Y. **Tel. Fallsburg 2F 22**

AVANTA FARM, ULSTER PARK, NEW YORK. Workers' Resting Place. Fresh milk and all farm products. Quiet, bathing, comradely atmosphere. Price $12.00 per week, $2.00 per day, $7-$10 for children.

Directions:
10 A. M. boat W. 42nd St., or 10:20 W. 129th St. to Poughkeepsie, ferry to Highland, 3:20 P. M. train Saturdays and 3:45 daily to Ulster Park. Round-trip total $2.71. 9W Route for car.

SUITABLE for groups or families. All modern conveniences. Tennis, handball, swimming, golf. Trained counsellors for children. Rent or buy on moderate terms. **WIsconsin 7-4149.**

FOR RENT OR SALE

SIX-ROOM BUNGALOW—All improvements—Mohegan Colony, Peekskill, N. Y., near the LAKE. For information call evenings. Pauline Milles. MElrose 5-9883.

FOR RENT—Mountain cottage near Beacon, N. Y. 5 rooms, bathroom (2 porches), $100 season. **P. K. Workers School, 35 E. 12th St., N. Y. C.**

FOR RENT

COMPLETE little theatre, modern stage, suitable for dance affairs. 299 seating capacity. **Kulturhouse, 266 E. 78th St., N. Y. C.**

CHILDREN'S CAMP

TREE TOPS, in Beautiful Croton Hills near Croton River. Most adequately arranged, educational equipment, conducted by trained experienced person. Very best diet. **Motherly care.**

Season June 1 to Labor Day, also all-year round or Limited Group 3 to 10 years. Highest reference given. Information, call Croton 683; write Box No. 1304, **New Masses.**

SUBLET

COMPLETELY FURNISHED modern cozy 3 room apartment—Houston, near Avenue A—$25 per month—**Watkins 9-5473 (Bess).**

BEAUTIFUL large studio—Kitchenette. Reasonable. Congenial, Comradely Atmosphere. **925 West End Ave., Apt. 5N. ACa. 2-6432.**

RUSSIAN TAUGHT

RUSSIAN TAUGHT. Simplified method. Special conversational course for tourists has been very successful. **Miss Isa Wilga, 457 W. 57th St. COlumbus 5-8450, New York City.**

RECORDED MUSIC

100,000 of the finest records in the world on sale at 50c and 75c per record (value $1.50 & $2). The Symphonies, Chamber Music, Operas, etc., of BACH, BEETHOVEN, BRAHMS, MOZART, WAGNER, etc. MAIL ORDERS, CATALOGUE.
THE GRAMOPHONE SHOP, INC.
18 East 48th Street **New York City, N. Y.**

LAUNDRY

LOWEST PRICES IN CITY. Full list on request. Strictly hand-work. Bachelor Service. Call and deliver in Manhattan. 10 percent trial discount to New Masses readers. **Greenwich Village Private Hand Laundry, 14 Washington Place East. SPring 7-3769.**

STATIONERY

PERSONAL STATIONERY with your name and address printed on white Hammermill Bond, 200 sheets (size 6 x 7)—100 envelopes—one dollar postpaid. Send currency, check or money order to **Individual Letters, 121 West 42nd Street, N. Y.**

DECORATION DAY WEEK-END
FOR YOUR VACATION
The Proletariat and the Intelligentsia Meet at
MAUD'S SUMMER-RAY
North Branch, Sull. Co., N. Y. Tel: Callicoon 95
All Kinds of Physical and Cultural Activities
City information regarding transportation, rates, etc., Phone KIngsbridge 6-3664

VICEROY RESTAURANT

107 West 42 Street **New York City**
Lunch 35c Dinner 50c
Large rooms for Parties and Banquets
Special Chinese Dishes *Comradely Atmosphere*
Telephone: MEdallion 3-9079

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

READ "THE THINGS AMERICA NEEDS TO KNOW"

LINCOLN STEFFENS

I CHANGE WORLDS

by ANNA LOUISE STRONG

The Story of the Remaking of an American with a foreword by LINCOLN STEFFENS

Read . . . this intimate personal story of an author . . . who "Discovered" the class struggle in America . . . who saw revolution in Mexico and China . . . who helped to start the Moscow News . . . who calls her conference with Stalin "the most important half hour of my existence" . . . who in telling of the laughs and heartaches and achievements of her fourteen years in the Soviet Union answers many of your unasked questions about it. *Our supply of the book is limited. Act quickly!*

"Yours is the next story that must be told in America." "Your book will clear up so many incomprehensibles. And so much good."—*Lincoln Steffens to Anna Louise Strong.*

Anna Louise Strong dedicates her book "to all of those Americans who stand where I stood fifteen years ago, and to all those Russian Communists who want to understand America."

get both for

$5.00

and 1 year's subscription to

NEW MASSES

AMERICA'S REVOLUTIONARY WEEKLY
FIGHTING FOR THE REMAKING OF AMERICA

"I would hate to do without The New Masses and will battle to keep from doing so," writes one subscriber. You, too, should get The New Masses regularly every week. By subscribing for a year you pay less than 7 cents a copy for the magazine which sells for 10 cents a copy on the newsstands.

"I Change Worlds" is published at $3. New Masses, bought on newsstands for a year, costs $5.20. This combination offer therefore *saves you $3.20.*

Mail this coupon Today →

NEW MASSES, 31 East 27th Street, New York, N. Y.

I want to read Anna Louise Strong's "I CHANGE WORLDS," and NEW MASSES for one year. I enclose $5, in full payment for both, in accordance with your Special Offer.

Address.....

Name.....

City and State.....

Occupation.....

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED